

Tarun Chakravarty



As the battle at the hustings becomes more animated SUNDAY correspondents examine the many ways in which Babu Jagjivan Ram could become our next Prime Minister: from a straight forward majority to some deft defecting with a block of 60-70 MPs owing personal allegiance to him. Will there be a hindu backlash? Will the much-vaunted Jana Sangh cadre deliver the votes? Can Babuji formulate policy as well as administer?



Can superstars save their seats? Election special brings you detailed reports on three superstar constituencies—Rae Bareilly, Secaram and Baghpur. Plus analyses by SUNDAY correspondents on how Muslims will vote. Introducing from this issue a new column by M. J. Akbar: Election Diary



The dramatic ups and downs of the second Test in the current India-Pakistan series are relayed through the transcribed daily round-ups of Asif Iqbal. Even he hadn't a clue that it would have such a glorious end—honours evenly shared and the game the victor.

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Home-spun truth

PRIME Minister Chaudhury Charan Singh in his very interesting review "The social origin of leadership" (November 18) has tried to focus the attention of the readers to his theory that the leadership of India as well as the administrative machinery must come by and large from the villages. It is a fact that rural India was neglected and the poor were exploited by a small group of privileged elite. But the exploiters were not only urban people. Those who exploited are distinctly a separate class who have derived the maximum benefit of freedom due to the mishandling of politics in the post-independence era. Rural-oriented leadership would not have solved the problem.

The basic reason was not "Nehru did not know much about land and its problems" or because "our politicians like all intellectuals were city people". Unfortunately, after Independence we did not have a leader with sacrificial patriotism and creative vision who could understand the various problems of India. The leader and his team must inspire devotion and character among the people. No nation can prosper unless the people and the politicians are hard-working, free from corruption and totally dedicated. Nehru failed because he could not visualise India's numerous ailments like illiteracy, casteism, unemployment, corruption, etc. could not be tackled by vested interests. Prime Minister Charan Singh has overlooked the fact that the intellectual level of anyone is more important, whether he hails from the cities or the villages.

B. K. Mukherjee, Howrah.

YOU have done a great service to the country by publishing the article by Mr Charan Singh. He has, to quote Shakespeare, successfully delivered a plain unvarnished tale. The most

powerful national bourgeoisie who took over the reins of the Government at the time of Independence still continue to rule the country. Before independence they were rich landlords and in the beginning of the post-independence era got themselves nominated and elected to high positions.

Veeray Koomar Shanker, Narkatta ganj.

MR CHARAN SINGH is a hypocrite. Living in air-conditioned houses and moving in Air Force planes, he has no moral right to utter the feelings of a hungry man. How many villagers are in his Cabinet? He is the Prime Minister and was also in the State Cabinet. Can he say what he has done for villagers? After last February's Budget all poor Indians remember Mr Charan Singh when they stand in a long queue for a litre of kerosene or a kilogram of sugar.

Pramod Mishra, Bhubaneswar.

THE thought-provoking article, "The social origin of leadership" is an eye-opener for those who champion the cause of the poor, the hungry farmers and general public. He is fully justified when he says that one who has not seen poverty cannot understand the problems of the Indian people. India can be an economically developed nation if practical leadership is resorted to.

Asmi Raza Mallick, Bhagalpur.

MR CHARAN SINGH's assumption of how a small privileged elite ex-

plott the silent majority which is the rural poor is not only thought-provoking but an eye-opener. His concern for the rural poor and his version of the political developments would have been even more laudable had he added a sentence on how six thousand professional politicians feed six hundred million people round the clock.

G. N. Sharma, Kanpur.

IN HIS article Chaudhury Charan Singh has proved that no one is fit to become our next Prime Minister. His article shows clearly the world of difference that exists between him and other politicians who hardly understand our nation's problems, but talk so much about them. I wish him all the best in his attempt to become the next Prime Minister so that he can uplift the starving masses whom all other Prime Ministers have intentionally or unintentionally neglected.

Laurens Francis Vincent, Madras.

THANK YOU for publishing Mr Charan Singh's enlightening article. It is a clear exposition of his clear thinking and analytical approach to the economic problems that plague India today. It is a brilliant rebuff to those who mischievously charge Mr Charan Singh with confused minds and allege that his ideas are antiquated.

At present Mr Charan Singh is the only national leader of any consequence, who has genuine interests in rural development.

M. V. Ramanatha, Tenali.

Bowled over

THE Sunday Special on cricket (November 18) was really exciting. We welcome the arrival of the Pakistani cricketers and we hope the current series will pave the way for good relations between India and Pakistan.

Prahlad Ghosh, Calcutta.

THE cricket issue was fantastic. Congratulations for presenting the interviews with the two Pakistani superstars. However, I cannot agree with the Australian skipper Kim Hughes' views when he doubted India's potential to face Asif Iqbal's visiting army.

Pyara Chandra Tripathy, Puri.

THANKS for the beautiful issue on cricket and particularly P. N. Sundaresan's "Will Pakistan thrash us?"

Bahambar Mohanty, Cuttack.

THANK YOU for the wonderful cover of Imran Khan. It is perhaps the first time that cricket has occupied quite a few pages in SUNDAY. One hopes that such articles and interviews continue to appear from time to time.

Indraneel Chatterjee, Berhampore.

ALL RIGHT, so Imran Khan is easy

on the eyes and his face on the cover did make a pleasant change from glowering godmen and dyspeptic politicians. However, having said what I should I must add that I felt awfully cheated by the November 18 issue. Nine full pages on cricket! For goodness sake, is SUNDAY too going the way of Bombay weeklies? Et tu, Brute! Having bought the magazine to ease a boring journey I found all I could do was read Asterix again and again and...

Nusrine Siddiqui, Pune.

MR P. N. SUNDARESAN's article, "Will Pakistan thrash us?" states that we won the series against Pakistan in 1951-52. As far as my knowledge of Test series is concerned we never played such a series against Pakistan. In fact, it was the first match of the 1952-53 series at the Feroze Shah Kotla in Delhi where Pakistan had a traumatic baptism in Test cricket. The '52-53 series was intensely absorbing and will be well remembered for long.

Tarjan Singh's article was delightful and reflected how glamorous and gorgeous cricket can be. Nirmal Mitra's questions to Asif Iqbal were excellent.

Mohammad Tawar Parvez, Lucknow.

Whodunit?

IN Opinion (October 28) under "A correction", Mr J. K. Jha, PRO of Tisco Ltd., Jamshedpur, clarified that Tisco had not given any facilities to Mr Majendra Singh, the RSS General Secretary to hold meetings in Jamshedpur. It is totally wrong and incorrect. Tisco had provided all facilities in the form of ground, electric, stage decorations, PA equipment etc. to hold their meetings and their mass rally on the Regal ground. A bill can be verified from the accounts department which will show that payment for the PA equipment was made to a local dealer against orders from the Town department, Tisco.

Indrajit Singh, Jamshedpur.

Shame on you

IHAVE just read Gunter Grass' account of Calcutta (November 4). It is predatory and aggressive and filled not with a compassionate anger but a despicable and demented hatred for the condition of the poor. A man who compares his fellow human-beings to diarrhoea and to "white-shirted maggots" and who is a German himself, is in grave danger of being accused of a familiar infection of mind in relation to the 'subordinate races'. Nor can I see how the knowledge of the Indian people about themselves can be enhanced by such wretched writing. It is surely the time, not for such mass-appealing exorcism at the hands of foreign pseudo-experts, but for a realistic and critical assessment of human realities free from this kind of hatred and self-hatred.

Calcutta is not a "pile of shit that God dropped" but a great city of ordinary people who preserve their courage and dignity against all odds. The "pus" and the "scum" which the complacent political world fastens on with such glee, which are the signs of real poverty, but to brood such fastidious hatred is the character, there must be and it is this character that is the real danger to the city and to the country.

It is time the Indian people freed themselves from the burden of guilt and racism which others feel for them. Gunter Grass, shame on you.

Pradyumn, Rustia College, Calcutta.

Troubled waters

THE odd details of the shoddy Bulgarian shipping deal, "Shipping deal: MGR in deep waters" (November 18) clearly indicate that this was the magic wand which both Charan Singh and Morarji Deas used to make the one-idea turned Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu dance to their tunes.

R. Ramakrishnan, Shikol.

Imaginary

IN "Turncoat Journalists" (November 11) Mohammad Yunus has suggested that Mr P. N. Dhar had been a sort of a quishing while in office and had helped the forces against Mrs Gandhi. He was rewarded for this inactivity by being recommended for a lucrative post in the United Nations by the Janata Government.

The truth is that the UN Secretary-General asked Mr Dhar for his services from the Janata Government. Instead of giving their consent they sent a panel of other names which included some persons who have since been provided with "berths". The Secretary-General wrote back to say that he would not dispute the opinion of the Indian Government about the persons in the panel but since the appointee had to work in close contact with him, he would prefer a person known to him. There was a sizeable correspondence between the Secretary-General and the Indian Government.

Ultimately, the Government of India agreed with the choice of P. N. Dhar, possibly for fear of adverse political opinion which its refusal would provoke. It is painful that Mr Yunus should indulge in a practice which he has criticised in his book vehemently—imaginary reporting!

P. N. Duda, New Delhi.
THIS refers to Hamdi Bey's statement in SUNDAY (December 2). Hamdi has not been entirely honest when he says that he fell in disfavour with his new employers, the

Ananda Bazar group, and that his job was attenuated. He was with us for three years after he left the Statesman following his superannuation. The management was always considerate with him. When he left the Ananda Bazar some of us decided to present him with a typewriter, for his personal use. We could collect only Rs 250 needing another Rs 2,250 to buy the typewriter. So we approached Mr Aveek Sarkar, the Managing Editor, for a contribution. He readily agreed to meet the deficit. When the typewriter was handed over to Mr Hamdi Bey in our office by the Chief of News Bureau, Sunil Bhan, in the presence of the Managing Editor, Mr Hamdi Bey certainly looked pleased. Even now, long after he has left the organisation, his articles do appear in one of the major publications of the Ananda Bazar Group—Business Standard. And, he often gets paid for them in advance. This is a rare exception, is this a disavour? As for Hamdi's charge that SUNDAY did not carry his pieces for quite a long time, one can reasonably argue that perhaps they were not found suitable. I am sure a great champion for the independence of the Press like Mr Hamdi Bey would himself feel embarrassed at the suggestion that the editor of SUNDAY should print whatever is offered to him by Mr Bey and that the editor should not have the freedom to choose his pieces. Imputing motives is still worse. Hamdi, what do you say?

Toosher Pandit, Principal Correspondent, Hindustan Standard, Calcutta.

Longing for her return

THIS is in reference to Pran Chopra's article, "Is Mrs Gandhi as popular as people imagine" (October 28). Those who are against Mrs Indira Gandhi see only ripples when there is a wave in her favour. This can be excused in politicians who battle against her. But it is inexcusable in the case of journalists. Most journalists who write on politics have little knowledge of what goes on in different political Parties. Now the question is about Mrs Gandhi's popularity. If seeing is believing then she is more popular today. The people who ditched her and her Party are once again longing to see her back in power. I have travelled many times with Indira Gandhi on her tours. I have seen vast multitudes cheering her. Do lakhs of people come just to have a glimpse of her face which most of them have seen many a time? When she denounces her opponents they cheer her lustily and shout "Indira Gandhi Zindabad—Deekhi Neta Indira Gandhi". Is this all dream or more fancy? Indira's is a personality which compels interest and attention. She has a significance for us for she is linked with the present India, and probably the future.

How can narrow-minded people who depend either on kulaks, hari-

jans, Muslims, brahmins thakurs or Varanasi sweets and perfumes compete with this energetic woman who is not only an Indian but a citizen of the world? To denounce her as a fascist is to betray utter ignorance of fascism. She is too much of an aristocrat, by training and temperament, to put up with the vulgarity and crudity of fascism. No doubt, she is firm in her dealings. There is a hint of hauteur about her, and she can be ruthless in dealing with situations and individuals. But this is not fascism. These are the virtues of a ruler who wants to do good to the people and give them freedom—freedom from hunger and want.

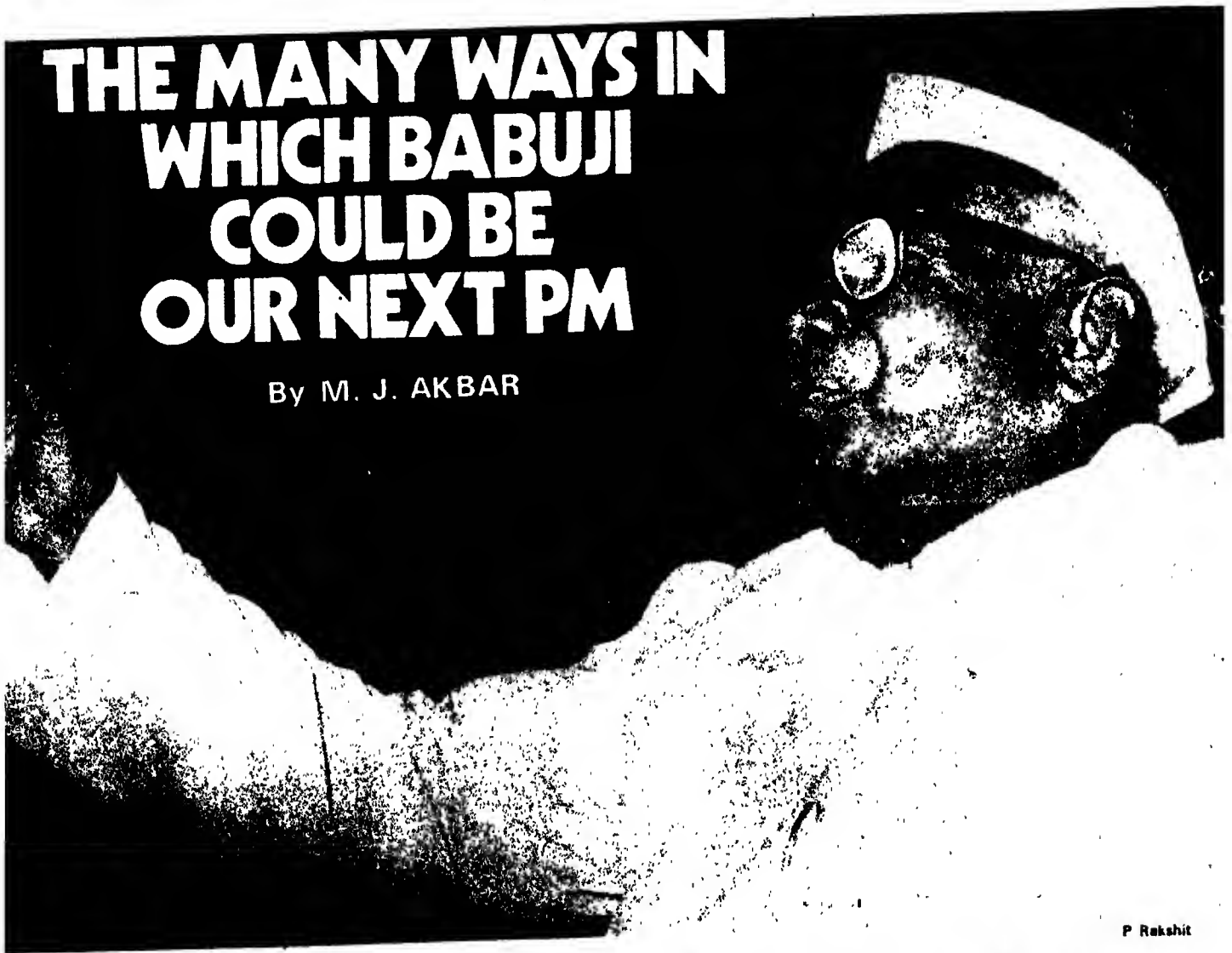
To harp on the excesses of the Emergency is now to waste time and look ridiculous. She has apologised for her mistakes and her people have forgiven her which is clear even to the meanest intellect. She has paid heavily for the wrong execution of some of her basically sound policies during the Emergency.

Undesirables gather around power as flies around sweets. And it is no wonder that some power-hungry charlatans had collected around Indira Gandhi. Being a very astute and intelligent person, she has realised what harm they did to her and the wedding out process has already begun.

P. D. Tandon, Allahabad.

THE MANY WAYS IN WHICH BABUJI COULD BE OUR NEXT PM

By M. J. AKBAR



P Rakshit

LET us leave astrologers aside, although the number of them predicting that Babu Jagjivan Ram will be the next Prime Minister should provide its own degree of encouragement to the Janata leader. Let us wander instead into the realm of hypothesis, a field by no means considered more reliable than astrology, but the only option left within the contours of reason.

The first way in which Babuji could become the next PM is the most obvious one: by the Janata Party getting a simple majority in the January polls. This is not the most credible of results, but we shall assume the mantle of the Janata stalwart and predict how this may happen: An electoral alliance will take place between the dominant upper castes in the north led by the thakurs, and the harijans, and enough Muslim votes will be brought in by the Muslim National Front to ensure

the victory of Janata candidates. The promise of Babuji as the next PM should break the harijan vote from Mrs Gandhi's grip (the message going out is that for 5,000 years the harijans have not ruled the country, and if Babuji is not made the PM, where is a harijan leader who can match his talents and make a bid for the highest seat of power in the foreseeable future?). Plus, there will be a Hindu backlash, after the manner in which the Muslim vote has been wooed this time, and the Jana Sangh should be the gainer. The truth is that the Janata has made as much effort to get the much over-rated Shahi Imam into its fold as anyone else, but that is another matter.

Then there is the theory of a credible alternative to Mrs Gandhi, and Babuji's leadership of the Janata certainly helps it here. The instability of the Lok Dal-Congress alliance is apparent, and the Janata hopes that by election time the vote that is

committed against Mrs Gandhi because of the Emergency will consolidate around it. All this put together, and given the possibility that regional advantages and disadvantages of the various Parties tend to cancel each other out, the Janata can make a claim towards emerging as the largest single Party, even if it does not get a majority.

Lastly, there is a simple truth about elections anywhere in the world: popular support is only a part of the battle; the ability to convert support into votes on election day is equally important. And here is where the role of the much-vaunted "cadre" of the Janata Party comes into the picture. What is this "cadre" that everyone talks about? The old Jana Sangh cadre, of course. So most Janata candidates will expect this cadre to help them win (and then can they go to Delhi and try and oppose the Freedom of Religion Bill?).

This brings us to the first paradox

of the postelection scene, a paradox which Babu Jagjivan Ram is totally aware of: what guarantee is there that the Janata MPs, particularly the Jana Sangh MPs, will elect him Prime Minister? Whatever may be the nature of pre-election alliances, the upper castes have a basic distaste towards handing over power to a harijan. Surely, this will never be cited as a reason by the polite and well-mannered MPs, but other accusations could be raised: Babuji's alleged unreliability, his supposed "lack of scruples" about joining Mrs Gandhi, etc, somebody may even remember the income tax, or Jaguar. This was surely why Babuji wanted an assurance in the Janata manifesto that he would be made the PM if the Janata won the elections, or was in a position to lead an alliance.

It is, indeed, in the latter context that Babuji stands the best chance of becoming the next PM. The reason is simple: he is the only one of the major claimants to the throne who can be acceptable to the largest spectrum of MPs, across Party lines. His enemies are not as bitterly against him as Mrs Gandhi's are, or as Chaudhury Charan Singh's have become; and he, among the Big Three, has perhaps the most number of friends (as distinct from loyalists) in the political arena. Plus, everyone accepts him as a good administrator, a man who can at least begin to tackle the mammoth problems that will face the next Prime Minister, whoever is unfortunate enough to become that. In fact, Babu Jagjivan Ram is the ideal compromise candidate who can be trusted to keep the various disparate groups, that will in all likelihood coalesce to create the next Government, together. There already have been two occasions when this was evident.

Before the March 1977 elections, the Janata Party had not declared who would be its Prime Minister if it won the elections. Morarji Desai had refused to join the Party unless he was made the chairman, a post Chaudhury Charan Singh also wanted. But the Chaudhury made the sacrifice for the sake of unity, and Morarji got the coveted position. However, no assurance was given to Morarji Desai that he would be PM. Indeed, if any hinting was done, it was to Babu Jagjivan Ram. In any case, when the Janata MPs were elected, the general consensus among the leaders of the various factions was that Babuji should be made the PM (only Charan Singh could not or would not tolerate that). But the reasoning of the leaders was clear. They were well aware of the hazards that beckoned. But JP and Acharya Kripalani succumbed to real or imagined pressure, and Morarji became PM. It was a suicidal decision. Morarji was too obstinate, too hung up on quirks, to make a coalition like the Janata Government work, and the Party paid the price.

If Babuji had been PM, it is doubtful if any split would have destroyed the Janata Government. In fact,

the Janata Government would probably never have fallen if Morarji Desai had not been so obstinate when the Parliamentary Party was deserting him in large chunks. Till the very end he actually believed that he had a majority, and he had been actually strengthened by the desertion of those who had left. If Babuji had become leader of the Janata Parliamentary Party even one week before he did, it is doubtful if Chaudhury Charan Singh would have become PM. Apart from the number of MPs who would have been tempted to return to the Janata, the Congress Party would have gladly offered support to him instead of the Chaudhury. The continuing efforts of some Congressmen to create yet another "new" Congress under Jagjivan Ram bear testimony to their need for Babuji. Fortunately for Babuji, he would not even think of trying to resurrect such a dead horse. But this sentiment in his favour will stand him in excellent stead in a hung Parliament.

Will there be a hung Parliament, with no side of the triangle able to get enough MPs to form a Government? Conventional wisdom says yes; but conventional wisdom rarely proves wise enough. Anyone predicting the outcome of the elections at the moment is largely indulging in wishful thinking. Nobody knows. The mechanics are different, the issues are different, and there are too many uncertain factors in every constituency. This election is enough to befuddle anyone. If the resentment against the current crop of politicians is strong enough, Mrs Gandhi could easily sweep the polls on the sentiment of being the best of a bad lot. If the memories of the Emergency become resurgent — and the handing out of tickets to Sanjay Gandhi's men is not helping the Congress (I) very much — then Mrs Gandhi could equally easily come second in too many constituencies. It seems reasonable to assume that Mrs Gandhi will get the single largest vote, nationally, but whether that percentage of the vote will be sufficient to see her candidates elected is another matter.

There will be a hung Parliament only if the Janata can defeat the Congress (I) in its strongholds, the Lok Dal can defeat Mrs Gandhi in its areas of influence, and the Congress (U) can hold its own in the few places where it has a vote. When the various Parties talk of the main fight being between them and Mrs Gandhi, they are all speaking the truth. Each Party, whether it is the Lok Dal in UP and Bihar and Haryana, or the Janata Party in the northern and central States, or the Left Front in West Bengal, or the Congress (U) in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, will have to fight against the candidate of Indira Gandhi, and attempt to mobilise all resources of men, money and sympathy to stop Mrs Gandhi. It is possible that the results could be surprising either way: either Mrs Gandhi gets more seats than the

pundits grant, or far less than expected. As for the number of seats which the various Parties will get your guess is as good as mine. The propagandists of the various Parties claim that they know, but even they in the silence of the nights, when the day's bustle has ended, know that they have been telling lies in the interests of electioneering.

If Mrs Gandhi gets an absolute majority, then of course the whole world knows who will become Prime Minister. But if the leading Party is about 70 or 80 MPs short of a majority, then will the fun and games start. And that is the main reason why there was such bitterness over the distribution of tickets. Whoever has 20 trusted men with him in this kind of Parliament will be a chieftain to reckon with: he can negotiate his own price. The price may not be as crude as straight cash, but surely the portfolio is a good thing to bargain about. We have already seen what a heavy price the Congress (U) extracted from the Chaudhury for their support. They got all the economic portfolios, surely to their individual and collective benefit.

The unasked, but much pondered, question about the fight to become the next PM is, what happens if Mrs Gandhi emerges with around 200 seats? She will still need 72 more to give her a majority, and this time the smaller Parties may not be as keen to make her PM as they were to keep her in saddle in 1969 and 1970. Will Babuji then take his personal supporters who may have won on the Janata ticket over to Mrs Gandhi's camp, in order to become the PM with her support? And would the Special Courts disappear then? Or would there be an effort to wean the "non-Sanjay" MPs away from Mrs Gandhi's Party, and form a non-Congress (I) Government—with Mr H. N. Bahuguna leading the exodus from Mrs Gandhi's camp? And how untouchable will the Jana Sangh be? What will be the role of the Chaudhury's MPs, who, even if they do not form a winning nucleus, could be sizable in number? Instead of becoming simpler, the labyrinth becomes more complicated, the more you look at it.

And yet the new Parliament cannot afford to leave Delhi without a Government. There are urgent money bills to be passed. There is urgent legislation to be done. And most of all, there is the crucial point: parliamentary democracy has to survive, doesn't it? And it can't survive if Parliament can't offer the country a Government, can it? Whatever the composition of the next Parliament, it will be forced by the gravity of the situation to create a Government, however short or longlived it might prove. And in a confused Parliament, the consensus can only veer round to one man—Babu Jagjivan Ram. For Chaudhury Charan Singh or Mrs Gandhi to become PM they need at least 225 seats in their control. Babuji is the only person who can become Prime Minister with only 50 MPs loyal to him.

WHEN New Delhi was charged with rumours towards November-end that Babuji was leaving the Janata Party to join Congress(I), the wise nodded their heads and said, "Where there is smoke there must be some fire". This old saying has a nugget of truth. But like many sayings it is only a partial guide to the truth. Smoke always means there is some fire. But sometimes it is a mistake to judge the size of the fire by the amount of smoke. Current politics in Delhi is such that it often generates more rumours than the facts warrant. The rumours about Mr. Jagjivan Ram are a case in point.

It was at least a month too late, probably more, for Babuji to switch sides, assuming he ever wanted to. By the end of November, the situation was such that neither did any Party need him as much as the Janata Party, nor could he lend as much to any Party as he could to Janata, nor could he get as much from any Party as from the Janata provided he did not allow his relations with the Jana Sangh to grow sour.

It is possible that he sometimes thinks other pastures are greener; very clever people are prone to that error. In such moments he falls into the traps set for him by Mrs Gandhi. Or else he makes the mistake of believing that his options are wider than they are, and thereby runs the risk of his colleagues deciding, in sheer desperation, to call what they may think to be his bluff.

Each time he makes these kinds of mistakes—or each time others think that he is moving off some place else and then discover he has not moved at all—he damages his stature. He also damages his bargaining position both in the eyes of Mrs Gandhi and in the eyes of such of his colleagues in the Janata Party who feel they have to bargain with him for what they think is their due share in the Party. Such damage, if repeated, can reach the point that Mrs Gandhi will acquire the unenvied option of either picking him up at her own price or deciding, after deflating his credibility, that she can afford to leave him just where he is.

But hitherto every appearance of his moving off towards Congress(I) has been only an illusion, created by Mrs Gandhi's political wizardry, aided on the one hand by the feverish imagination of a few journalists and on the other by the mistakes Mr. Jagjivan Ram allows himself to make. This was certainly the case in the last week of November. The fact was that there was no question of his leaving the Janata Party, and much less of his joining Mrs Gandhi. The rest was smoke.

But it is the fire that is more interesting.

A tussle for seats has been building up in all Parties since about the middle of November. Perhaps the most interesting tussle was taking place in the Congress(I), which as a

Will Babuji gain from a Hindu backlash?

By PRAN CHOPRA



Babuji with Nanaji Deshmukh

result increasingly looks likely to emerge from the elections as Sanjay Gandhi's launching pad. But the one which concerns us more here is the tussle in the Janata Party between the former Jana Sangh group (they still call themselves that!) and all the rest—the most prominent among the rest being of course those who are closest to Mr Jagjivan Ram. Ranged on one side is Babuji's personality pull (which has made him the most sought after politician today) and on the other hand the organisational strength of the Jana Sangh group. The former is much the stronger factor. But the latter also gains in strength each time Babuji's credibility gets a jolt from the kind of incidents and controversy in which he was involved in the last week of November.

Hitherto Mr. Jagjivan Ram has always had the upper hand in this tussle; the Party always reaffirms its loyalty to him. Whenever matters have been brought to a head, either by his supporters (as at the meeting of National Executive of the Janata

Party) or by his brief absence from a Party meeting (which always produced the unnerving effect expected of it even if the reason was stated to be his indisposition), or by the Jana Sangh group itself, Mr. Jagjivan Ram has got his way. His prestige ensured him that, as also the nervousness which spread through the Janata Party whenever there was an exchange of signals between him and the Congress (I), and somehow these signals always coincided with news of rivalries within the Janata Party.

This game was the substance of the fire in the last week of November. But the fire was certainly bigger and hotter than usual, and definitely it signed the Party's beard before it could be brought under control. Why was this so? There are many explanations for it and though some are superficial some go deep down into the changing nature of Indian politics, which in turn has caused a subtle change in power relationships within the Janata Party in the past few weeks.

THE first of the superficial explanations is of course that rival claims for Party tickets are always more tough and unyielding than differences on most other counts. Next only to the way voters vote, what determines the fortunes of groups within Parties is their share of Party tickets and the sort of constituencies for which they get them. Therefore the bargaining becomes a lot tougher. The second explanation, also superficial and much more a rumour than fact, is that the thought is said to have occurred to some people in the Janata Party that should it come to the crunch, the Party could find an alternative captain in Mr. Chandra Shekhar; this affects the willingness to accept Babuji's terms.

A third and less superficial reason is that the ghost of a worn out slogan has yet to be finally laid, the slogan that all Congressmen, wherever they may be, should come to the aid of the Party, along with Mrs Gandhi (but not under her leadership) if that is possible, and without her if necessary. If such a thing were to happen, the Jana Sangh would be left high and dry. The Jana Sangh is determined to be ready for such a thing, and the precaution it is keenest on is that it should emerge from the elections with as much strength as it can. Therefore it was fighting as hard as it could for every ticket.

They would have been inclined to do so in any case. But the group's leaders were also under strong pressure to do so from their field cadres. These cadres are a resolute lot, and their strength is the best contribution the Jana Sangh group can make to the Janata Party's success. But they expect a price in terms of tickets, and if this expectation was not wisely handled (by which I do not mean that it had to be unquestionably met) many Janata candidates could find themselves deprived of this valuable source of support.

But why are the cadres, and their leaders, more assertive now, and what gives them the greater courage to be so? This brings me to a more deep-seated reason for the recent fire and some significant changes which have lately taken place in Indian politics.

One gets the distinct impression that the Jana Sangh has come out of the shell of defensiveness into which it withdrew in the face of the combined attack by almost all Parties, which for the past some months have been jointly accusing it of communalism, and in the recent games of alliance-making have treated the Jana Sangh as an untouchable. The attack and the Jana Sangh's response confirm that communalism is still a dirty label for any Party to carry in Indian politics. But that the Jana Sangh is singularly guilty of it is a charge which seems to have spent itself. If anything, there is now a Hindu backlash in favour of the Jana Sangh, and it is



Babuji with Chandra Shekhar

quite possible that with its superb organisation the Sangh will be able to convert this charge into an electoral advantage.

The backlash has its own reasons. There is a growing "Hindu" edge to the reaction among many people against the demand made by many Muslim conferences—one of them presided over by Sanjay Gandhi in Madras on November 25—for communal representation for Muslims, and that too by reservation, in legislatures and services, including the defence services, in proportion to their population. The demand still arouses ugly memories of the partition among many people.

V. V. John has wittily described this as "selective secularism" and I have elsewhere described its practitioners as "part-time communalists" who divide their time between accusing the Jana Sangh of doing something which they also do themselves for the rest of the time! An example is their ardent wooing of the Shahi Imam of the Jama Masjid, Delhi (apart from many Hindu saints and mahants) which enabled the Imam to play a role in the alliance politics of Parties claiming to be secular. Many Hindus have been heard to remark very candidly that if Hindus started voting as Hindus, the electoral prospects of the Jana Sangh would vastly improve. Even if the Jana Sangh does not go along with that as yet, it has ceased to be entirely on the defensive.

The Jana Sangh had, earlier earned a lot of goodwill among a lot of people for three other reasons. First, while the defectors were wrecking the Janata Party, the Jana Sangh was working overtime trying to save it.

Second, the two Jana Sangh Ministers were among the best in the Janata Government. Third, the very people who were the loudest in condemning the Jana Sangh for its alleged communalism either became allies of the casteism of the Lok Dal or the inverted communalism of the Congress(I).

This goodwill by itself might not have been worth many votes and seats for the Jana Sangh. But it has given the Sangh political respectability in the eyes of those who were lukewarm towards it because of the label of communalism hung upon it. It also made the Hindu backlash in favour of the Jana Sangh look less "Hindu" and therefore more acceptable to wider sections of society than it would have been otherwise.

It has this more revived, more confident and less defensive Jana Sangh that Babuji encountered in the latest tussle within the Janata Party, a Jana Sangh more under pressure from its cadres to look after its interests more in need of doing so in the face of future moves to reunite the various Congresses, and more able to assert itself, having absorbed the attack of the secular battalions.

Naturally the tussle lasted longer and was hotter. This time too the outcome was that Mr Jagjivan Ram had his way; more assurances were given to him than by him. But every one was left in a more chastened mood, more forewarned about the dangers of the next round, and more reluctant to provoke one. For the reason, if none else, the chances are that the Janata Party is going to be a bit better behaved in the coming weeks till the elections than it has been.

Mrs Gandhi is the main opponent

By KEWAL VARMA

NOBODY knows who will be with whom tomorrow. This is the state of Indian politics today. Now both friends and foes of Babuji are united on one point. If he does not defect before the elections, he will do it afterwards. The only question before a large number of politicians is whether to defect now or later. Bahuguna has done it now. Anrit Nahata, while doing it, gave a farcical touch to Indian politics. Parliament and power hold so much lure for politicians that, short of murder (Well, even murders are not unknown) they will do anything to gain an access to them. The standard for this amoral and opportunistic politics was set by the topmost personalities themselves. The three claimants for prime ministership, Mrs Indira Gandhi, Mr Charan Singh and Babu Jagjivan Ram, have made known their ambitions in the crudest possible manner. They do not leave it to others to say that they would become the Prime Minister. They themselves assert that they alone are destined to become that.

Mrs Gandhi has had it announced that she alone can save the country. Charan Singh says his lifelong ambition has been fulfilled. Jagjivan Ram has been nursing this ambition right from the day of the Allahabad High Court judgment against Mrs Gandhi in 1975. First Mrs Gandhi did not oblige. When he got the second opportunity, Morarji Desai did not yield. When Charan Singh broke the Janata Party, Jagjivan Ram felt he had got yet another opportunity to become the Prime Minister. But again Morarji Desai upset the apple cart. However, since then Jagjivan Ram's every single political move has been motivated to become Prime Minister. When the Janata Party was left with only 205 members, he tried to entice Congressmen and Harijan members of other Parties. But he could not make any headway. In those days of political horse-trading, when a delegation of top Congressmen met him to suggest that he should leave the company of the Jana Sangh, he bluntly told them: "Tell me your arithmetic which can make me the Prime Minister."

Jagjivan Ram so wants to become Prime Minister that he is prepared to pay any price for it. In his last round of negotiations with Mrs Gandhi, when a proposal to make him the Congress president was rejected by her, Jagjivan Ram proposed that he should be made the Prime Minister and in 1982 when President Sanjeeva Reddy's term expires, Mrs Gandhi should become the President

and the Constitution could be amended to provide for a presidential form of Government. When this did not click, he fell "sick", throwing the entire Janata Party in a state of confusion. He "recovered" from his "illness" only when he secured a firm assurance that the Janata Party would commit itself in the election manifesto to making him Prime Minister. To be doubly sure, an advertising agency was asked to organise a big campaign in newspapers that Babuji would be Prime Minister, if the Janata won.

However, everybody knows that the Janata Party cannot get a single-handed majority. Babuji also realises it. In fact, he was negotiating with Indira Gandhi precisely for this reason. Since those negotiations did not succeed, Jagjivan Ram is exploring his other post-election options. When the Congress operators led by Rajni Patel made their last attempt to wean away Babuji from the Jana Sangh and make him lead the Congress, Jagjivan Ram told them: "Wait till after the elections. You bring as many of your people as possible and I will bring my maximum number of people in Parliament and then we shall see." According to his calculations, the Janata may get about 150 seats and the Congress about 60. This makes 210. He will then get the support of regional Parties like AIADMK, Akalis, smaller Parties and Independents. He thinks that he can then get the support of the Leftists also. He feels he can also encourage defections from the Congress (I) and Lok Dal. This way he will be able to form the next Government. But there are many snags in this calculation. First, the Janata may not get as many seats. Second, it is not easy for the Congress to support Babuji if he remains in the company of the Jana Sangh. Similarly, the Leftists are committed to fight both authoritarianism and communalists.

Jagjivan Ram, however, has not lost hopes of a reversal of the situation so that the Congress (I) would support him for the prime ministership. The question is if the Congress (I) falls short of a majority and holds the balance, will it support Jagjivan Ram or Charan Singh? The answer to this question will depend on the performance of the Leftists. If the Leftists win more than, say, 80 seats, the anti-Communism of the Jana Sangh will make it join hands with Mrs Gandhi to fight communalism. Even during the Emergency when Sanjay Gandhi started attacking Communists, many Jana Sangh leaders developed a sneaking admir-

ation for Sanjay Gandhi. Another force working to bring Indira Gandhi and Babuji together is the industrialists of the country. During the days when Babuji was having his most sensitive negotiations with Indira Gandhi, the capital was thick with rumours that top industrialists of the country had collected at Maurya Hotel in Delhi and offered to pay a very high price (according to gossips it was Rs 30 crores) to bring about this unity, with Babuji playing a junior role in this partnership. The industrialists were selling this line in the name of ensuring political stability and for them Rs 30 crores is not too high a price. The joke was that Babuji was prepared to accept it as a bonus, his main price being the prime ministership.

Mrs Indira Gandhi and Babuji are the two strong candidates for Prime Minister of India's propertied classes and anti-Left forces. But the question is, if Indira Gandhi cannot become Prime Minister, will she support Jagjivan Ram? This will depend on how much influence Jagjivan Ram will be able to wield with the Harijan masses. Even if he succeeds in taking away a small slice of the Harijan vote, it will be a net loss to Mrs Gandhi. She also knows that if he becomes even a temporary Prime Minister, he may prove to be the proverbial camel in the tent and gradually edge her out from among the Harijans at least. If Indira Gandhi has dynastic ambitions, so has Jagjivan Ram. His son, Suresh Ram, is his closest political confidant. In this situation, Mrs Gandhi may continue to dangle the carrot before him without letting him grab it. She may make an offer to Jagjivan Ram but would attach such strings that he may not be able to accept it. For instance, in a situation where she does not have a clear majority, but holds the balance, Mrs Gandhi could make the first offer to Jagjivan Ram to become Prime Minister provided he leaves the company of the Jana Sangh. This may not be acceptable to Jagjivan Ram because if he defects the Jana Sangh, he may be completely at the mercy of Indira Gandhi. In any case, Mrs Gandhi can present before Jagjivan Ram a real Hobson's choice. It is in Mrs Gandhi's best interest to finish off Jagjivan Ram politically. He is her only rival among Harijans.

Babuji is also calculating that if the picture is unclear after the elections, he will be able to engineer defections from other Parties. He thinks that he can use the Harijan banner for this purpose. But Babuji's appeal among Harijans is highly over-estimated. His bubble was first pricked by Jawaharlal Nehru when he was dropped from the Cabinet in 1963 under the Kamaraj plan. It caused no ripples among Harijan members of the Congress. The late Lal Bahadur Shastri called Jagjivan Ram's bluff again when he did not care to seek his support in the election for the prime ministership after the death of Nehru.

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"I understand" she said, and promptly hit a high C! Her Spanish eyes danced when she saw our incredulity.

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Nearly a million and a half pieces. Twelve colours. Seven briefcase styles. Twelve types of suitcases and carry-ons. Two vanity case models. Then, we returned to our first theme.

"We have two luggage ranges" we specified carefully.

"One is called Classic..."

"I knows" she informed us, "with Indian brocado lining and the combination locks if I like it. I like it!"

"The other" she informed us, "is the Travel-right!"

"Travelite" we corrected.

"Yes" she agreed, "that is the right way to travel. But your colourful new range is also less costing..."

"Less expensive" we supplied.

"Could we name one of our loveliest shades Spanish Gold after the lady?" we requested, formally. She coloured with delight!

"Maybe" she countered, "you'll like to call uno modelo El Cid?" Referring to the legendary Spanish hero of trip after trip after trip!

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'Poverty is indivisible'

A. N. PRABHU interviews Jagjivan Ram



Q First, what do you think are the Janata Party's poll prospects?

A: I expect an absolute majority. The real contest will be now between the Congress(I) and the Janata Party. While I agree that the Janata Party will not sweep the polls as it did in 1977, I would say that nor would the Congress (I) sweep the poll in South India.

Q: What do you think will be the pattern of results?

A: The pattern will be that we will get the larger number of seats in the north, and the Congress (I) will not get that many seats in South India. In the South, the votes will be divided between the Janata Party, Congress(I), All-India Anna DMK, Congress (U) and DMK.

Q: Babuji, a question that is agitating the minds of some people, and this is a charge against your Party, is that the Janata is dominated by the Jana Sangh...

A: How is it dominated by the Jana Sangh? The point is even in Parliament, at the time of the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, the former Jana Sangh had 90 MPs out of a total Janata membership of 205. Well, 90 cannot dominate 205. In this (election) they are not getting many more seats.

Q: Are they getting the same constituencies?

A: Not always the same constituency. Of course, sitting members get the same constituency—what-ever constituency they might have belonged to, they are getting the same constituency.

Q: What is the criterion you have adopted? Is the ability to win the seats the main thing?

A: Yes, the ability to win a seat is the main criterion but naturally we cannot completely forget other factors.

Q: What do you think will be the role of the caste factor?

A: The caste factor has always played some part in the elections, and this time it will be more prominent in two or three States, such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Haryana, due to the Lok Dal's main plank bringing caste appeal, the appeal to what is known as the "intermediate castes" (Laughs).

Q: What do you think of Mrs Gandhi's charge about the CIA links of a Minister in 1971, and her sudden revelation of this?

A: I don't think there is any substance in that. It is just to create a cloud over some people.

Q: What do you think of this type of serious charges?

A: They are very mean charges. She cannot say she came to know of them only after these were made

outside (the country). It is the same way as Moynihan making the charges (against Mrs Gandhi).

Q: Babuji, what is your response to the persistent rumours about you, about your joining the Congress (I) despite your denials at your weekly meetings with the Press? What could be the reason?

A: The reason is simple. I enjoy the confidence of large sections of the electorate in this country. Several Parties have been very much perturbed over this, and in order to create confusion among the people they go on making this false propaganda. Unfortunately, a section of the Press in our country, without ascertaining the authenticity of such allegations or rumours, give wide publicity to such rumours and play them up.

Q: Babuji, you said economic issues would dominated the current elections. Would you single out the major issues?

A: As I have said earlier, the main economic issue will be unemployment—among the educated and uneducated. It is more serious among the educated because they are vocal people. Then, rising prices, which affect the lower middle class and working class, artificial shortages, raising prices of certain commodities which are not in short supply.

Q: That of course is true about urban areas. What about the rural areas?

A: Even in rural areas; they are also affected by the rise in prices. There is a psychology of price rise, and the farmer also raises the prices of his output. There are certain commodities which are really in short supply and one can understand a rise in their prices. But there are commodities which are not in short supply and there is no case for a rise in prices of these items. There is no case for a price rise in sugar, for instance, except for a slight rise in sympathy with the rise in prices in the world market.

Q: What do you think could be the impact of the left democratic front?

A: Has it come into existence?

Q: Will you hazard a guess about how many seats the Janata Party will win?

A: No, no; not at this stage.

Q: Two points Mrs Gandhi harps on is the need for stability at the centre, and the need for Emergency as a dose of medicine for the country's ills. What do you think of this?

A: Well, one can never agree that a nation requires a state of perpetual Emergency for encouraging discipline. Secondly, stability does not belong only to numbers. Mrs Gandhi had won an overwhelming

majority in the 1971 elections. She was popular in 1972 and 1973, but she lost the popularity by 1974 and naturally she lost her stability also. And in order to establish artificial stability she had to take recourse to the Emergency...

Q: Do you think the situation now demands such drastic measures?

A: The organised sector is in a position to understand and respond to appeals. They will appreciate, they are in a position to appreciate, what is the national income, what is the condition of various sectors, and that our people do not now get one-half of what they were getting. They will understand. It is necessary to have a wages, incomes and prices policy. But it is a complex problem. I think if an appeal to various sectors is made, the organised sector will co-operate.

Q: You don't think there is need for an Emergency to settle the productivity and the strikes problem?

A: I have always found the organised sector very reasonable. I don't think there is any need for any Emergency-type of powers. If such a situation develops, I think we have to make an appeal to the nation and the people always co-operate.

Q: There have been reports that you are unhappy with the distribution of seats because the dominant faction in the Janata Party is trying to get a large chunk of seats...

A: The reference seems to be to the Jana Sangh. I think they have been very reasonable.

Q: What do you think of the controversy unleashed by the Lok Dal: rural against urban, farmer against city dweller, heavy industry against small and handicrafts sector etc?

A: This conflict will destroy the villages, and destroy the country. Fortunately, there has never been any conflict between the villages and the cities. It is the village people who come to the urban areas. I am from a village. I have not lost my roots in the village. I still go to the village. And every year the village population contributes to the growth of the city. Take Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta. Village people come to these cities, and there cannot be any conflict. Poverty is indivisible. Poverty has to be attacked wherever it is. I don't think poverty in urban or rural areas should be distinguished. There is opulence in urban areas, and there is opulence in rural areas. And the poor people in urban areas are more unfortunate than the poor people in rural areas. Again, there should be no conflict between large industry and the small sector. People forget that heavy industry contributes to the growth of small industry by supplying some of the raw materials. So what is required is to make the two complementary and supplementary, not contradictory to each other.

Thursday, August 16

O. P. Arora telephoned me in the morning to say that both Jagjivan Ram and his son Suresh Ram wanted to see me. Arora is Jagjivan Ram's Private Secretary. I informed him that I could only agree to this after talking to Sanjay.

Talked to Sanjay and he agreed that I should meet them. I told Arora that it did not bother me to visit their house provided it did not bother Jagjivan Ram and his son. He informed me, from their side there was no objection. So, the meeting was fixed for 3.30 pm at Jagjivan Ram's house.

At about 11.30 am Arora phoned me again saying that I should meet them earlier and suggested an immediate meeting. I said, this was not possible as I was otherwise busy. He again phoned me back in half an hour requesting an immediate meeting and I agreed that I could meet them at 1.15 pm. I went to their house at 1.15 pm. I was taken to Suresh Ram's room. He received me most cordially and we had a long conversation which went on as follows :

SURESH RAM (SR) : I have heard so much about you and was very keen on meeting you.

Kamal Nath (KN) : So, what is the present situation? How many MPs have you rounded up?

SR : We are trying and are quite hopeful to round up many MPs. Babuji has got great regard and respect for Indiraji. He has never attacked her personally except in Chikmagalur. In Chikmagalur he did it because he was upset with the photographs which were published by Maureka Gandhi. In fact Babuji was not even going to Chikmagalur. I think an alliance between Babuji and Indiraji is the most logical thing.



Satyendranath Mahalanobis

WHEELING AND DEALING IN DELHI

August 16 to August 18 were hectic days. The vote in Parliament was due and both the contenders for the PM's job, the new incumbent Chaudhury Charan Singh and the aspirant Babu Jagjivan Ram, were anxious for the support of Mrs Indira Gandhi's MPs. The discussions centred around what price this support would fetch. Kamal Nath, Sanjay Gandhi's friend, was one of the main negotiators in the drama, and he was talking to Suresh Ram, who was obviously representing his father Babu Jagjivan Ram, on the one hand, and to Biju Patnaik, who was trying to save the Chaudhury's Government. Biju Patnaik promised to settle all the "problems" for example regarding the cases, but Law Minister Kakkar sent up a note which said that withdrawing the cases would be political suicide. Devi Lal even told Kamal Nath that he would leave the Janata(S) if his Government did not compromise with Mrs Gandhi. His Janata successor in Haryana, Bhajan Lal, seemed equally willing to help Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay in return for Congress(I) support for Babuji. They were all playing games, and who finally won will be decided on January 3 and January 6 of next year. These pages from Kamal Nath's diaries display the extent of behind-the-scenes bargaining that went on while the nation was going through its worst political crisis. This extract, too, is taken from BARUN SENGUPTA's explosive forthcoming book, *Last Days of the Morarji Raj*, being brought out by Ananda Publishers, Rs 35.

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They can form a formidable force. Indiraji's support is also largely from the harijans. If they are separate then the harijan votes will be split and both Babuji and Indiraji will stand to lose. I don't know how Indiraji is supporting Charan Singh. He has all Indiraji's enemies with him—Karan Singh, Pal, George Fernandes, Madhu Limaye, Raj Narain, Subramaniam, etc., etc. People like Raj Narain have during their whole life not only opposed Indiraji but also opposed Panditji. How can he be with Indiraji? The same with George Fernandes. By joining hands with Babuji, Indiraji will be able at one stroke to eliminate all her enemies.

KN: That is all very well, but what about the Jana Sangh? We have taken a public posture against the Jana Sangh. A large part of Babuji's support comes from Jana Sangh MPs. How can this be settled? It will be impossible for Indiraji to be with Babuji as long as the Jana Sangh remains with him.

SR: A solution to the Jana Sangh problem would be found. What I am suggesting is an agreement subject to the solution of the Jana Sangh problem. You must understand that all the enemies of Indiraji are with Charan Singh. I will tell you a story of Charan Singh's character. During the 1977 election, without any invitation, Charan Singh arrived in Babuji's constituency, ostensibly to campaign for him. He was never asked to come, but came only to show that he was trying to be helpful. He begged Babuji to come to his own constituency to campaign for him, as he was not sure of winning the election. At that time Babuji was interested to see that he wins, and he left his own constituency and went to Charan Singh's constituency. I personally persuaded Shahi Imam to go to his constituency as the Muslim voters were not in favour of Charan Singh. Babuji, Bahuguna and Shahi Imam went together to campaign for Charan Singh. On reaching there all of them found that no arrangement had been for them. Even the date was such that it was impossible for Babuji to climb up. And Charan Singh did not even acknowledge Babuji. In fact, he arrived at the last moment for the meeting. He did not also acknowledge Bahuguna or Shahi Imam. Charan Singh is a man of this type. I want you to explain to Indiraji that Charan Singh will use her support and then finish her. I don't understand how Indiraji agreed to support Charan Singh.

KN: What was the alternative? Babuji is with Jana Sangh and Morarji had to be removed. So, the only choice was to support Charan Singh.

SR: What is your understanding with Charan Singh? What has he agreed to do?

KN: There was certainly no agreement regarding the withdrawal of the Special Courts. There was only the general understanding of co-operation.

SR: But I wonder, how can you

support Charan Singh? He is a dangerous man.

KN: I will explain to Indiraji and Sanjay all that you have told me. But it is better for you and Babuji to take up this matter directly with Indiraji and Sanjay.

SR: Please do everything possible. We are trying to rally round a lot of MPs and we hope that even without Congress (I) support we will be able to outvote Charan Singh on the 28th. If the Congress (I) is also with us then we will be able to defeat Charan Singh miserably.

KN: OK. I will let you know.

SR: When will you come again? I must know the reaction immediately. It is very urgent. Because if the Congress (I) stand is known, many MPs from the Congress (S) will also come over.

KN: I will phone you in the evening and let you know everything.

SR: Please try and arrange a meeting with Sanjay as early as possible.

At 5.50 p.m. I met Sanjay and told him about my discussion with Suresh Ram. Sanjay agreed to meet him. I rang up Suresh Ram from Sanjay's room and told him I would be meeting him in ten minutes. Suresh Ram was very keen. As soon as I reached, Suresh Ram wanted to know about Sanjay's reaction.

KN: It is better that you meet Sanjay personally. He will be coming to my place for dinner. You can come there.

SR: Where is your place? Do you think it will be safe? Nobody will see us? What type of person is Sanjay?

KN: Don't get nervous. I am sure you will get along well with each other.

SR: What line should I take? Have you explained everything to him? What is the trend?

KN: You ask too many questions. I think a meeting between you and Sanjay will answer all your questions.

Sanjay and Maneka came to my house for dinner at about 8.30 pm. Suresh Ram came five minutes later. Sanjay and Suresh held their talks in a separate room. The issue concerning the Jana Sangh was discussed. Suresh explained to Sanjay that if Babuji and Indiraji were not together the harijan vote would split. Sanjay did not agree with this view and almost directly said that Babuji's hold on the harijans had been diluted over the years. They discussed the number of MPs who would go with Babuji. Their discussions lasted one hour.

ed over the years. They discussed the number of MPs who would go with Babuji. Their discussions lasted one hour.

Friday, August 17

At about 8 am Arora phones me and enquires about the previous night's meeting between Suresh Ram and Sanjay Gandhi. Says, Suresh wants to know what was Sanjay's reaction to the discussion. He suggests there should be another meeting between me and Suresh Ram. I agreed to a meeting at 11.30 am. But meanwhile I get a frantic call from Biju Patnalk's office that Patnalk wants to meet me urgently. The time was fixed at 10.30 am. I went to see Biju Patnalk at his office. The conversation went like this:

KAMAL NATH: How are you? We have not met for the last couple of months.

Biju Patnalk: Yes, I have been very busy. But tell me what is happening? Will Indiraji vote with us or not?

KN: I don't know how you expect Congress (I) to vote for you after the way Charan Singh has behaved since 28 July. He did not even have the decency to meet Indiraji. He drove past her house while going to meet Devraj Urs. Although information had been sent that he would be going to Indiraji's house he did not go. He went to Chavan's house also. I explained all these things to Charan Singh during my meeting with him. But he told me he can't abide by anything which has been agreed to by Raj Narain. Charan Singh in his meeting with me took a very stiff attitude.

BP: No, no, I will settle everything. What is wrong with you people? How can you vote with Jana Sangh? Babuji has only 15 MPs of his own. You are misunderstanding everything. We did not take George Fernandes into the Cabinet because we knew he is against Indiraji.

KN: Does Charan Singh know that I am meeting you?

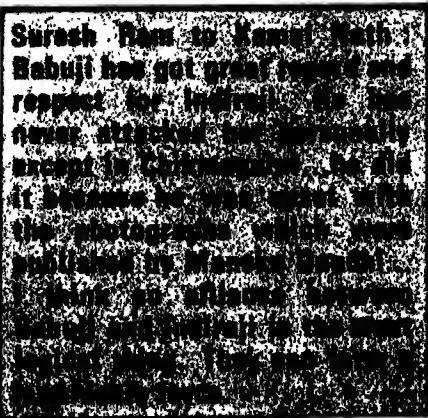
BP: What is the harm if he knows?

KN: He may suspect you. He is totally unreliable and senile. He has planned that after getting the vote of confidence on the 20th he will put Indiraji into great difficulty, send her to jail and then hold a snap poll. This is his plan.

BP: Do you think we will allow him to do such a thing? I have nothing personal against Indiraji. For over 20 years, I have known her. I was with Panditji all along. But circumstances turned such that I could not be with Indiraji. The trouble is, Raj Narain had been talking to Sanjay. You see, Raj Narain is Raj Narain.

KN: But Raj Narain is the chairman of Janata (S) and how can you discount him? And to a large extent Charan Singh became the Prime Minister because of Raj Narain.

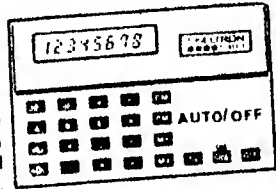
BP: Yes, he is the Party chairman. We made him the chairman



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STUDENT POWER



because he did a lot of work. In fact, Charan Singh was against mass resignation and against resigning from the Government till the last moment. It is we who precipitated the situation by resigning. Explain this to Sanjay. Where is he? Phone him and tell him everything from here.

KN: Why don't you tell him yourself?

BP: Yes, I want to do that. I think I should meet him. When and where can I meet him? Ring him up immediately from this phone and confirm from him.

KN: But where can you meet?

BP: We can meet at Prithviraj Road—Pappu's house, (Pappu is Navin, his son. He was with us in school.) Nobody will know we are meeting there. Now ring up Sanjay quickly, let us fix this meeting. I will settle all the issues. (I phone Sanjay and talk to him. Sanjay agrees to meet Biju Patnaik at 8 p.m. I tell Sanjay that I will meet him in 15 minutes.)

BP: What does Sanjay say?

KN: Sanjay agrees to the meeting. You can take the meeting as confirmed. We can meet at 8 p.m. Now, I have to meet Charan Singh. What should I tell him about our discussions? Should I tell him you are meeting Sanjay?

BP: Why are you worried so much about Charan Singh? He will do whatever I say. Leave it to me, let me ring him in your presence, (He phones Charan Singh in my presence and tells him that the situation is bad and that Indiraji's support is doubtful. He says he is meeting Sanjay and me in the evening and will sort out everything.) See, I have told Charan Singh very clearly. Don't worry. I will sort out everything.

Call from Arora. I must meet Suresh Ram. He is anxiously waiting for me. I agree to meet him at 6.30 p.m. The conversation was like this at that meeting:

SR: I waited for you for the whole morning and you never came. I have been very anxious to know what happened after my meeting with Sanjay.

KN: I have been extremely busy and it was in your interest. Sanjay was happy meeting you. He has talked to Indiraji. I think things will go in your favour. Have you talked to Babuji?

SR: Yes. Babuji is very keen. You must remember that Babuji and Indiraji have been close for so many years. In fact it is unnatural for them to part.

KN: I will let you know more by tomorrow. Don't worry.

SR: I want your personal assurance that everything will be all right. I know you are the only one who can do it. You are the only one who is concerned about the interest of Indiraji and Sanjay. And I know you will be able to convince them if you want to.

KN: I am convinced that Indiraji will not vote for Charan Singh. That is the reason why I am meeting you. Things are fine at present but I cannot give you any assurance. (While

we were having this talk Bhajan Lal, the Haryana Chief Minister enters the room.)

Bhajan Lal: I am very glad to meet you.
KN: How are things with you?

BL: Things are all right, and it is for you to see that they remain all right.

KN: Let us see.

BL: No, no. The fact that you are here means things will be all right. Otherwise, how could you be sitting in this room? I want to know one thing, should I withdraw the cases against Bansil Lal?

KN: I cannot answer that, until I talk to Sanjay or Indiraji. But I believe you are already withdrawing them. That is what I read in the newspapers.

BL: No, no, I am not withdrawing them. The newspapers have given a false report. I spoke of vindictive cases in general. But they took it to be the cases against Bansil Lal. Where is Sanjay? I want to meet

Biju Patnaik to Kamal Nath:
You are misunderstanding everything. We did not take George Fernandes into the Cabinet because we knew he is against Indiraji... Do you think we will allow Charan Singh to send Mrs Gandhi to jail and then hold a snap poll? I have nothing personal against Indiraji... We can meet Sanjay at Pappu's house. Nobody will know we are meeting there. Now ring up Sanjay quickly, let us fix this meeting. I will settle all the issues.

him. Do you think you can arrange a meeting?

KN: That will be no problem.

BL: Come and have lunch with me tomorrow. We must sit and discuss a lot of things.

KN: I am very busy, but we will have lunch one day.

SR: When will you meet me again?

KN: Tomorrow.

SR: No, no. We must meet again today, even late in the night if necessary. I am very anxious to know what is Indiraji's reaction.

I go and pick up Sanjay. We reach Navin Patnaik's house at about 8 p.m. Navin was waiting at the gate, whereas Biju Patnaik was standing at the entrance of the house. Warm introduction. Biju Patnaik tells Sanjay of his old connection with Panditji and Mrs Gandhi. The meeting lasts till 9.30 p.m. Sanjay tells Biju Patnaik that Congress (I) is very upset about the various actions taken by the Charan Singh Government after he became the Prime Minister. He also mentions that the atmos-

phere of goodwill which was promised by Raj Narain has not been fulfilled. But the matter which is causing serious concern is the new attempt of harassment against Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay: he lists them as:

1: Filing of a petition by the Government for summary disposal in the non-petitioning case of the Shah Commission before Justice Chawla, the intention being that the Government will then be able to take quick action against Mrs Gandhi.

2: Transfer of the Kissa Kursi Ka case to the Supreme Court.

3: Reopening of income tax cases of R. K. Dhevan and his family.

4: Application for cancellation of bail for Sanjay in the polymer case.

5: Refusal to grant bail to the hijackers who had hijacked an Indian Airlines plane when Mrs Gandhi was arrested.

6: Non-issue of passports to Sanjay and Maneka Gandhi.

Biju Patnaik, after hearing these, is taken aback and says that if all these are true then his recommendation is that the Congress (I) should not vote for Charan Singh. However, he assures that he will have all these corrected. Biju Patnaik wants Sanjay to list out these points on paper and give it to him at 10 o'clock the next morning. It was decided that I would collect the paper from Sanjay and reach it to Biju Patnaik at his office at 10 the next morning.

After the meeting ended I dropped Sanjay at his house and proceeded to Suresh Ram's house.

SR: I was waiting for you and was wondering whether you will come.

KN: Why are you so nervous? I am talking you that things will be all right for you. You had better devote your mind to solving the Jana Sangh problem. That is very important.

SR: Can I take it as 100 per cent certain that you will vote against Charan Singh?

KN: I am giving you no such assurance. I am only saying that things are moving all right for you.

Saturday, August 18

At 9.30 a.m. I go to Sanjay's house, collect the paper listing all the points, which was made out, and proceed to meet Biju Patnaik. I reached his office around 10.30 a.m.

KN: Here is the paper sent by Sanjay. I think Charan Singh has gone off his head. On the one hand he wants Indiraji's vote and on the other he wants to do all these things. I do not know how you are with him.

BP: Don't get excited. Everything will be all right. I have talked to Kakkar, the Law Minister and he says that the transfer of the Kissa Kursi Ka case from the High Court to the Supreme Court was mandatory according to the Special Courts Act.

KN: This is absurd. I have read the Act myself. The Government has to make a declaration and that declaration has to be filed in the Supreme Court. Only thereafter does

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the Supreme Court take up the case and order a transfer. There are two stages—one is making the declaration and the other is filing the declaration before the Supreme Court.

Biju Patnaik rings up **Kakkar** in my presence. He talks to **Kakkar** in a very annoyed manner and tells him what they are doing is wrong. **Kakkar** apparently tells him that **Ram Jethmalani** has advised him to do all this things. **Biju Patnaik** shouts back at **Kakkar** and says that **Ram Jethmalani** is not even with **Janata (S)** and tells him that he is phoning **Charan Singh** to fix up an immediate meeting. Immediately thereafter **Biju Patnaik** rings up **Charan Singh** and tells him that **Kakkar** is making a mess. The points given by **Sanjay** are very minor. It appears that **Charan Singh** has become desperate and asks **Biju Patnaik** to meet him within half an hour in his office. **Biju Patnaik** then gets the list retyped by his Private Secretary **Khetrapal** and sends the paper personally through **Khetrapal** to **Kakkar**.

KN: I do not know why you are wasting your time. I know **Charan Singh's** intentions are bad. All these stories that he does not know what is happening are all to mislead us. I think you ought to think in terms of a political realignment. I am sure you will be able to collect 80 to 90 MPs. Once you do that I assure you support of the Congress (I) and then you can be the Prime Minister.

BP: Everything has a time. I will discuss this with **Indirajit**. But for the time being it is essential that you vote for us. Otherwise the **Jana Sangh** will take over the country. You must put some sense in **Sanjay's** and **Indirajit's** heads. I personally assure you that I will correct all these things contained in the note. See, I have already started going into action.

KN: Before the time of the voting all these things must be done. If they are not done, there is no question of Congress (I) voting for **Janata (S)**. After all, the things mentioned in the note have all occurred after **Charan Singh** became the Prime Minister. There can be no excuse for that. All items contained in the note are our pre-conditions. Even our MPs are against voting for **Janata (S)**. **Mrs Gandhi** must have at least something, to tell her MPs to vote for **Charan Singh**. In her heart of hearts she wants to vote for **Charan Singh**. I am only asking you to create some situation so that she is able to tell the Congress (I) MPs to vote for **Charan Singh**; but don't take this for granted. If these things do not get done, you can forget about **Charan Singh** getting Congress (I) support.

BP: Don't be so rash. You have to react politically.

KN: This applies to both sides. Just now **Raj Narain** is meeting **Sanjay** in **Kapil Mohan's** house. I am sure it is going to be a fiery meeting.

When I met **Sanjay** at 9.30, he mentioned that he was leaving at 10.30 for **Kapil Mohan's** house for a meeting with **Raj Narain**. This is the

first meeting between **Sanjay** and **Raj Narain** after the Congress (I) voted against **Charan Singh** in Bihar.

BP: I will contact you after meeting **Charan Singh**. What telephone number will you be available at? **Bahuguna** has also assured me that there is no reopening of the income-tax cases where **Dhawan** and his family are concerned. Give me a photo copy of the notice.

KN: I will give it to you in the evening.

Meeting with **Sanjay** at 1.30 p.m. when he tells me about his meeting with **Raj Narain**. In the meantime, from **Charan Singh's** room **Biju Patnaik** has spoken to **Sanjay** and told him that the declaration for transferring the **Kissa Kursi Ka** case was made before **Charan Singh** became the Prime Minister. **Sanjay** tells him that it might have been done, but the declaration has been filed in the Supreme Court only after **Charan Singh** assumed office. **Banarasi Das**,



Sanjay Gandhi: You are not only a liar but also a fraud.

Raj Narain: Nobody has called me such names and talked to me like this. Whoever has done this has either got beaten up by me or I have just walked out of the room.

Sanjay Gandhi: Why don't you beat me up or go out of the room? You are a liar and a fraud.

Chief Minister of UP, also talks to **Sanjay** on the phone and assures him that the hijackers will be given bail. As described to me by **Sanjay**, the discussion between **Sanjay** and **Raj Narain** went something like this:

SANJAY GANDHI: So you want to make a fool of me again?
Raj Narain: No, no—don't get upset. Every thing will be alright.

SG: You are not only a liar but also a fraud.

RN: Nobody has called me such names and talked to me like this. Whoever has done this has either got beaten up by me or I have just walked out of the room.

SG: Why don't you beat me up or go out of the room? You are a liar and a fraud.

RN: I told you I will try to do various things.

SG: You are a liar. There is no question of trying. You had assured me that you will do it. Don't change your stories now.

RN: I have already told **Charan Singh** and he has said he will do that.

SG: Okay—as and when they are done come and look for our votes. Don't talk about our votes before that.

RN: Don't worry—everything will be done.

SG: I am not worrying—it is you who should be worrying. It is you who need our votes. You had said that the **Kissa Kursi Ka** case will not be transferred. So now you are a liar. You had said that the hijackers would be given bail. So you are a liar again. You had stated that no further prosecution would be launched. You are a liar again.

RN: Why should you rub it in that I am a liar? You have already told me that more than once.

SG: I am doing it purposely to make you realise what you are. (Thereafter they discuss various issues and the note sent to **Biju Patnaik**.)

In the meantime information reaches **Raj Narain** that the Press and photographers have arrived. **Raj Narain** is surprised that they had come to know, for the meeting was kept top secret. **Raj Narain** asks **Kapil Mohan** if there is a back door to the house. **Kapil Mohan** says there is a back door. **Raj Narain** suggests to **Sanjay** that they should leave by the back door. **Sanjay** does not agree and says that he is not in the habit of either coming in or going out through back doors. He tells **Raj Narain** that he can leave through the back door if he wants.

5 p.m. Meeting with **Suresh Ram**. **Suresh Ram** had rung me up several times during the day and had left messages.

KN: I have good news for you. Things are moving in the right direction.

SR: I told you—you are the only person capable of doing it. Now should I take it that Congress (I) will not vote for **Charan Singh**?

KN: I am only telling you that things are moving in your favour.

6 p.m. I visit **Haryana Bhavan** to meet **Lakshman Singh**. There I find that **Devi Lal**, Ex-Chief Minister of **Haryana**, is also waiting. **Devi Lal** also assures me that everything will be corrected. He goes to the extent of saying that if **Charan Singh** does not stand by the agreement he will quit the Party. Apparently, **Devi Lal** is not fully aware of what is happening. At 7 p.m. I visit **Sanjay's** house. I apprise **Mrs Gandhi** of all that has been happening. She laughs and says, "Good for them—they must know that the Congress (I) vote is not available that easily".

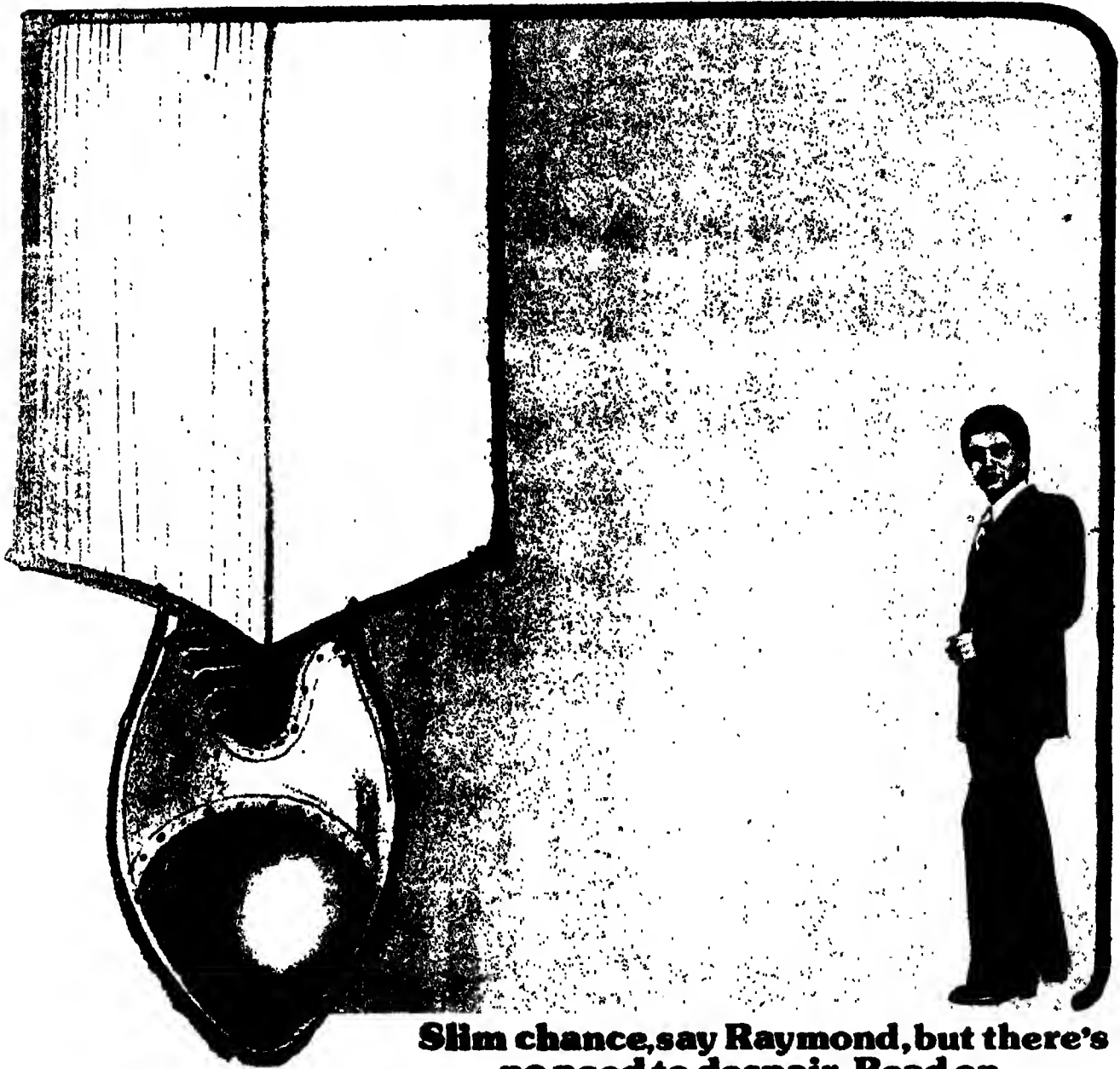
8 p.m. **Biju Patnaik** had telephoned me two or three times and had left messages. So I visit his house at 8 p.m.

KN: So what is the latest?

BP: I have a detailed note prepared by (Law Minister) **Kakkar**. Here it is (he shows the note to me). It will be political suicide for us to withdraw the declaration from the Supreme Court regarding the **Kissa Kursi Ka** case.

KN: Then don't expect our vote.

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President Reddy is guilty!

L. K. ADVANI, Information and Broadcasting Minister in the Janata Government, and a former journalist, tells his side of the story of how Jagjivan Ram was denied the chance to form a Government and elections were ordered. This is an extract from "The People Betrayed" (Vision Books Private Limited, Rs 35)

WORKING OUT a rational explanation for what President Sanjiva Reddy did is the most difficult part of this puzzling story. His own explanation is that he acted in accordance with the dictates of his conscience. This statement of his has only provoked cynical guffaws in the Press, and the spontaneous and nearly unanimous comment from all observers: the President is required to heed the Constitution, not his conscience.

All constitutional and legal pundits were unanimous that after the resignation of Charan Singh on August 26, 1979, the President should have invited Jagjivan Ram to form a Government. All political pundits were unanimous that if Jagjivan Ram had been invited to form a Government, the Government would have lasted its full term up to 1982.

In fact, dissolution was demanded by the Chaudhary, by Mrs. Gandhi and by the Marxists, precisely because of this political assessment of theirs that Babuji's Government would be a stolid, stable Government, that would see the sixth Lok Sabha complete its full term.

Mrs. Gandhi did not want Charan Singh as caretaker Prime Minister. She maintains that under him polls would not be free and fair. But confronted with an option between Chaudhary as Prime Minister of a caretaker Government, and Jagjivan Ram as Prime Minister of a stable Government till 1982, she immediately opted for Charan Singh. For the President, the crucial touchstone for deciding if dissolution, and a mid-term poll, is justified in a situation, ought to be whether a stable alternative government headed either by the Leader of the Opposition or by any other member is feasible or not.

In the Constituent Assembly, Dr B. R. Ambedkar dealt with this issue of dissolution at some length when he replied to a debate on an amendment tabled by Prof. K. T. Shah. The amendment suggested that if the Prime Minister advises the President to dissolve the House, the advice must be in writing. "If the object of Prof. Shah," Dr Ambedkar explained, "is that the Prime Minister should

not arbitrarily ask for dissolution, I think that object would be served if the convention regarding dissolution was properly observed. So far as I have understood it, the King (in Britain) has a right to dissolve Parliament. He generally dissolves it on the advice of the Prime Minister, but at one time, certainly at the time when Macaulay wrote English history where he has propounded this doctrine of the right of dissolution of Parliament, the position was this:

It was generally agreed by all politicians that, according to the convention then . . . the King was not necessarily bound to accept the advice of the Prime Minister who wanted a dissolution of Parliament. The King could, if he wanted, ask the Leader of the Opposition if he was prepared to come and form a Government, so that the Prime Minister who wanted to dissolve the House may be dismissed and the Leader of the Opposition could take charge of the affairs of the Government and carry on the work with the same Parliament without being dissolved. The King also had the right to find some other member from the House if he was prepared to take the responsibility of carrying on the administration without the dissolution of the House. If the King failed either to induce the Leader of the Opposition or any other member of Parliament to accept responsibility for governing and carry on the administration he was bound to dissolve the House.

AT TWO stages of the recent political crisis, the President undertook extended rounds of consultations with senior politicians, lawyers and other public luminaries. I was also among the two score or so whom the President invited for consultations in the first phase. This phase began immediately after Morarji Desai tendered his resignation, i.e. on July 15. Consultations went on for several days with scores of political leaders. At the end of it all the President came to the conclusion that the Leader of the Opposition, Y. B. Chavan, should be

asked if he could form a Government.

What was the purpose of these consultations? To sound those whom he had called whether his National Government idea was salable? Certainly no consultation was necessary with anyone to decide that the Leader of the Opposition should be invited first of all. Was the President unaware of this simple fact? Also, was the President unaware that constitutional pundits have specifically forbidden such consultation? Ivor Jennings has written:

The rule is that on the defeat and resignation of the Government the Queen should first send for the Leader of the Opposition . . . The rule has for its corollary the rule that before sending for the Leader of the Opposition the monarch should consult no one. If he takes advice first, it can only be for the purpose of keeping out the Opposition or its recognised leader. To try to keep out the Opposition is to take sides in a Party issue.

On July 21, President Reddy issued an unusual Press note. The Press note expressed the President's "distress" at certain newspaper reports "insinuating that he is not a disinterested party in the current political crisis facing the country and that he has political ambitions of his own". The newsweekly *Sunday of Calcutta* (July 29, 1979) carried a scathing article by Barun Sengupta, tearing to pieces the President's posture of disinterestedness, and commented:

It is all right for the President to be distressed at the Press reports implicating him and hinting that he was involved in a political game of his own during the crisis. But who is to be blamed for this? If one examines all that the President did and said during the first days of the present political crisis then it becomes clear that he has been behaving like a politician, not a President. Had there been a tape recorder in President Reddy's office like the one in President Nixon's what would it have revealed?

The second round of similar talks was held on August 20 and 21. The

leisureliness which marked the first phase was conspicuously missing in this second phase. Rightly so, one should think. But while expedition was understandable, the President's precipitousness was not. On the morning of August 20, just one hour before the Lok Sabha was to meet to give its verdict on his confidence motion, Charan Singh convened an emergency meeting of his Cabinet and decided to tender his Government's resignation. When the House met at 11 A.M. sharp, Chaudhary did not even turn up! The Speaker informed the House that the Government had resigned. The House insisted that there should be a formal communication from the President in this regard. The House was thereafter adjourned till 2 p.m.

Soon after this adjournment, Jagjivan Ram went to Rashtrapati Bhavan, informed the President that he was in a position to form a Government and to prove his majority in the House. Sanjiva Reddy's response was that he was collecting his thoughts and would like to consult legal opinion before he took a decision. All those who met the President that day, including the former Law Minister Shanti Bhushan, came away with one clear impression, that insofar as the advice of the Charan Singh Government about dissolution was concerned, the President did not regard it as binding. His Government, after all, was a conditional Government. The letter inviting Chaudhary to form a Government had laid down an express stipulation that the Government should prove its majority in the Lok Sabha by the third week of August. But the Government had not even faced the House.

On August 20 itself, Sanjiva Reddy had a long telephonic talk with Nani Palkhivala who was at Pune that day. Palkhivala was asked to come over for personal discussions. Palkhivala duly arrived the next day. I understand that the counsel he gave to the President was very categorical: the Chaudhary Government's advice was absolutely of no consequence; Jagjivan Ram could be invited and asked if he can form a Government. I am not aware of any leading legal or constitutional expert, barring of course Charan Singh's Law Minister Kacker, whose opinion had been materially different from that of Palkhivala. Even those who favoured a mid-term poll were of the opinion that Jagjivan Ram could not be denied a chance.

Why then did the President reject this legal opinion? The communique issued by Rashtrapati Bhavan on August 22 does not enlighten us. It deliberately avoids pinpointing the basis of the President's decision. It refers to the Cabinet's advice, to the opinion of political parties in favour of dissolution, and to the consultations held with constitutional experts and concludes that the "President, after considering all relevant aspects of the situation, decided to dissolve the Lok Sabha".

The Cabinet's opinion had been known on the morning of August 20, itself. So was the opinion of the major parties. My own feeling is that the President also was intent on a mid-term poll. Our charge therefore was that the President had decided in advance that he would not invite Jagjivan Ram. All that he was seeking was legal and constitutional sanction for the course of action he had in mind. He soon discovered that this sanction was not forthcoming. In fact, expert opinion was vehemently against it. Palkhivala summed up this opinion very forcefully when he wrote:

... elections are the heartbeats of a democracy. If they happen too fast or too irregularly, democracy collapses. To put an end to Parliament merely because two ministries could not face a no-confidence or confidence motion is no more rational than to cut off the head to cure a cold.

Meanwhile in Parliament, following the fall of the Charan Singh Government, a situation was rapidly developing which, if it had crystallised, would have made it impossible for the President to dissolve the Lok Sabha. On the morning of August 20, Jagjivan Ram had the committed support of 203 Janata members and about one score others. By the evening a dozen more members had signed in his favour. Also, by that evening it became apparent that a huge chunk of Congressmen were up in revolt against their leadership.

By the afternoon of August 21 it became known to all that a few senior Congressmen were hecticly canvassing support for Babuji. One of them who spoke to me that afternoon told me that the number of Congressmen willing to back Babuji would be between 30 to 35. They had convened a meeting the next morning and, maybe, they would succeed in making the Congress (S) reverse its decision.

That evening, however, I received two disturbing bits of information from sources close to Rashtrapati Bhavan: firstly, that Cong. (I) leader Stephen had been specially sent for and told that the letter (regarding the Party's stand on dissolution etc.) which Mrs Gandhi had promised to send to the President the next day (August 22) should be sent that very night; and secondly, that the President was likely to announce dissolution on August 22 morning. I promptly conveyed this information to Jagjivan Ram.

The same evening Vajpayee spoke to AIADMK leader M. G. Ramachandran on the phone and found him very responsive to his proposal that AIADMK support Babuji. "Why not come down to Madras, so that we finalise the arrangement?" MGR suggested to Vajpayee. On August 22, Vajpayee, Ravindra Verma and Subramaniam Swamy left for Madras by the first flight. All this was duly conveyed to Rashtrapati Bhavan, the object being to apprise the Head of State that in the clear polarisation taking place in the House between

the Janata leader Jagjivan Ram and the leader of defectors Charan Singh, the Janata leader was fast moving towards securing an absolute majority in the House.

One more thing may be mentioned here. On August 21, Janata President Chandra Shekhar had met the President and conveyed that Janata was in a position to form the Government. "How will you do it? By encouraging defections?" Sanjiva Reddy had sarcastically commented. To which Chandra Shekhar's retort had been forthright: "Having nominated a defector as Prime Minister, why should you object to defections?"

But it is noteworthy that the swing in favour of Jagjivan Ram was not brought about by defections to Janata. It was based on two clean factors: firstly, the AIADMK, with its strength of 18, had agreed to change its stand; and secondly, the rank and file of the Congress (S) was bent on forcing its leadership to revoke the support they had extended to Chaudhary only for their own ministerial *quoddis*. All the members of the Congress (S) Parliamentary Board had walked straight into the Cabinet. They had not waited even for a common programme to be drawn up.

By the evening of August 22 both these events, one pertaining to AIADMK and the other to Congress (S), would have fructified. Our charge is that the President, aware of what was happening, wilfully sought to forestall these developments by dissolving the House.

In the first phase of the crisis, Morarji Desai resigned on July 15 and Charan Singh's Government was sworn in on July 28, thirteen days later. In this second phase, the President was not willing to tarry even three days. Within 48 hours of Chaudhary's resignation, he had dissolved the House!

DURING THESE two days, Mrs Gandhi and C. M. Stephen, between them, must have met the President four or five times. Veritably, the Rashtrapati seemed to have accepted Mrs Gandhi as his principal adviser. If, on the basis of known facts, one were to reconstruct the probable nature of consultations that went on between the two the synopsis would run something like this:

Mrs Gandhi urges dissolution and mid-term poll.

President agrees.

Mrs Gandhi says: But I do not want Chaudhary to continue as caretaker Prime Minister. I do not trust him. He will rig the polls.

President agrees but asks: What is the alternative?

Says Mrs Gandhi: Why not have Jagjivan Ram as caretaker Prime Minister?

Replies the President: I am agreeable. If you can persuade him, I am willing to accept your proposal. So Mrs Gandhi despatched



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C. M. Stephen and Kamapati Tripathi posthaste to G. Krishna Menon Marg. Here the two held parleys with Jagjivan Ram and Chandra Shekhar. Two alternative proposals were made: Congress (I) was willing to support Jagjivan Ram if he formed a Government minus Jana Sangh. Having made a sucker of the Chaudhary they thought they could do the same to Babuji. Having succeeded in splitting the Janata Party once, they wanted to try a second such operation. The alternative proposal was: form any government that you want but at the first cabinet meeting of your Government you must advise dissolution and a mid-term poll.

Jagjivan Ram and Chandra Shekhar rejected both the proposals. The two Congress (I) leaders returned disappointed. They knew that the manner in which the Congress (I) had pulled the rug from beneath Chaudhary's feet was going to make him embittered and vindictive so they did not want him to preside over the conduct of polls. But the only way this could be avoided was to let Babuji form a Government. Mrs Gandhi just could not afford this. It would mean a total abortion of her strategy. So she decided to suffer the Chaudhary as caretaker Prime Minister. The President was informed accordingly. The decks were cleared for Charan Singh to continue presiding over the destinies of the nation for four crucial months, though he had not faced Parliament even for a single day!

On August 22, around 10.15 a.m., Chandra Shekhar was at my residence when there was a phone call for him from Jagjivan Ram. The President had invited the two of them, Jagjivan Ram and Chandra Shekhar, to meet him at 11 a.m. We all presumed that the President wanted to sound Jagjivan Ram personally as to whether he was willing to be a caretaker Prime Minister.

The two, therefore, were pleasantly surprised to find Sanjiva Reddy in an unusually cordial mood making enquiries about the support the Janata Party had been able to mobilise for Jagjivan Ram. Chandra Shekhar then categorically told him that the Janata Party was willing to prove that it commanded majority support in any way the President wanted—either in the House or by submitting a signed list of members. To this, the President said that he was in no hurry.

From Rashtrapati Bhavan, both the Janata leaders came to the Party office in Parliament House, and apprised other colleagues of the talks. A phone call came from Vajpayee from Madras that his talks with M. G. Ramachandran had been successful. Babuji told him about the meeting with the President. All of us got busy finalising our list. We felt confident by the evening we would have a formidable tally of 275 to 280 signatures to submit to the President. A letter was promptly addressed to the Rashtrapati, giving a

gist of the morning's talk, and informing him that by evening a list of members supporting Jagjivan Ram would be sent to him.

Shortly after noon, however, news arrived that the President had dissolved the Lok Sabha! On the face of it, the President's action seemed a pre-emptive step. It betrayed an attitude totally unworthy of a person holding such a high office. Jagjivan Ram and Chandra Shekhar expressed their sense of shock and outrage in very emphatic terms.

The President has a plausible excuse why he opted for a midterm poll: A majority of Party leaders in the Lok Sabha wanted it. But he had no excuse to justify why he did not ask Jagjivan Ram to face the House. Chaudhary's and Mrs Gandhi's men agreed glibly. How many times was he to give Janata a chance?

The fact is that after the fall of the Desai Government as a result of large-scale defections, Janata was never given a chance. Morarji Desai



and Charan Singh were both asked together, to submit lists. Charan Singh was given a chance then to prove his majority on the floor of the House. He failed. In all fairness the Janata should also have been given the same opportunity.

In 1968, as chairman of the Delhi Metropolitan Council I had the privilege of participating in the All India Conference of Presiding Officers. The conference was presided over by Sanjiva Reddy who was at that time Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The Governor's role vis-a-vis the Legislature was being keenly debated at that time. It would be in place to recall here what Reddy himself had said at that time:

In no circumstances should it be left to the Governor to determine whether a Chief Minister continues to enjoy the support of the majority of the members or not, even if the members make their opinion known to the Governor in writing. It is the prerogative of the Assembly to decide this issue.

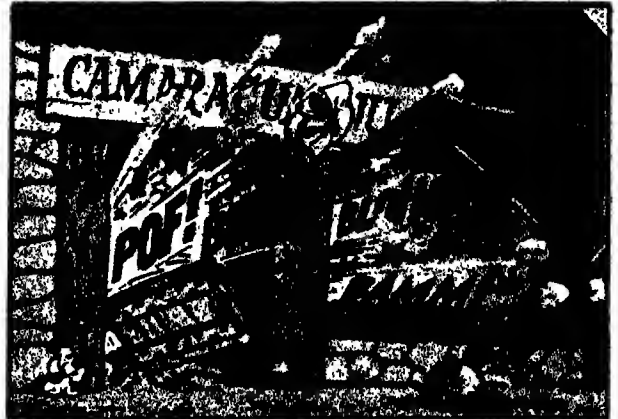
Sanjiva Reddy has on more than one occasion proudly claimed that he was the first President to have been unanimously elected.

I am sure Reddy would appreciate that if unanimity of election is desirable for Presidency, unanimous faith in the bonafides of the President during his tenure is even more imperative. Reddy's handling of the recent crisis has gravely impaired this faith. The biggest Party in the last Lok Sabha alleged malafide.

How strongly some Party colleagues from his own State felt about what he had done was brought out sharply by a remark made in a recent meeting of the Janata National Executive. Jaipal Reddy, leader of the Janata Legislature Party in Andhra said that the Party position in the State today was far better than it was in 1977. In the Lok Sabha elections of 1977, the Janata had won only one seat. "If I were to be wise by hindsight," he added, "I would say it would have been to our advantage if we had lost even that." That one seat was Sanjiva Reddy's.

Janata's reaction may be regarded as subjective and biased. But surely the President must ponder why the reaction of so many others had been so sharp and critical. Quite a few leading papers, including *The Indian Express*, *The Times of India*, *The Deccan Herald*, *The Tribune*, criticised his decision. *The Indian Express*, in a front page editorial titled "In Bad Odour," wrote a particularly severe leading article saying: "We wish we could dismiss the President's conduct as no worse than perverse pleasure in play-acting." Acharya Kripalani said that a midterm poll was no solution. It would not solve the problem of political uncertainty. A poor country like India should not have been burdened with frequent elections. M. C. Chagla, respected jurist and elder statesman, described the decision as "most unfortunate and erroneous." Nayanara Sehgal observed: "It is not at all clear why the President behaved as he did. This episode adds another chapter to the acts of those at Rashtrapati Bhavan who have treated with the utmost carelessness and disdain their most sacred duty to protect the Constitution."

A. G. Noorani, well-known constitutional and legal commentator, wrote: "The procedure which the President has adopted is unprecedented in a Parliamentary democracy and violative of many of its basic rules. The founding fathers consciously adopted the British system because the country was very familiar with it. But that system, said Gladstone, 'presumes more boldly than any other, the good faith of those who work it.' It is sad to find this quality wanting at the very apex of our constitutional structure." Even Janata's opponents like K. D. Malaviya felt that the dissolution decision was wrong. Jagjivan Ram should have been given a chance to form the Government, Malaviya said.



WE'RE AFTER TWO
GALLISH OUTLAWS, AND I
BROKE A WHEEL ON THESE
INFERNAL FLAGSTONES.
MY MATE TOOK THE
HORSES TO FETCH
YOU TO...

FETCH
US TO... OH
YES, I
SEE!

YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO
REPAIR HIS
CHARIOT, ARE
YOU? HE'S
AFTER US!

YOU
BET I AM.
HE DOESN'T
KNOW WHO
WE ARE.
HE'LL GET US
PAST THE
ROAD-
BLOCK!

NOW, HOP IN YOUR
CHARIOT, AND DON'T WORRY.
YOUR MATE SAID NOT TO
WAIT FOR HIM.

HE
DID?

IF ONLY
HE KNEW
IT'S US HE'S
AFTER!

TEEEHEEEHEE!

OBELIX,
YOU'LL SPOIL
EVERYTHING!

WHO
GOES THERE?

LET US PASS,
FISHINGUS.
THESE
TWO ARE THE
BREAKDOWN
MEN.

OH,
I DIDN'T
SEE YOU,
SPONGE-
FINGUS.
PASS!

TEEEHEEE!
CONTROL
YOURSELF
OBLIX!

HAHAHAHA!
HOHOHOHO!
HAHAHAHA!

HEY, NOT SO FAST!
WHERE D'YOU THINK
YOU'RE GOING?
STOP!!!

I'VE HAD
ENOUGH
OF HIM!

NOOOO! DON'T
CUT ME OFF!
DON'T CUT
ME OFF!

SO HAVE I!
HE'S
DELAYING
US.

WE SHALL MEET
AGAIN, GAULS!
WE SHALL MEET
AGAIN!

WE'RE
COMING
TO OUR
NEXT STOP:
DUROCORTORUM.
*

ARE WE
GOING TO BUY
WINE HERE?

THERE'S
NO HIDING
ANYTHING FROM
YOU, OBLIX!

DUROCORTORUM
WINE
VISIT OUR
CELLARS

Spot report

Uttar Pradesh

Baghpat: Chaprauli may carry Charan Singh through



BAGHPAT Parliamentary constituency is an area basically dominated by people who are known for their rebellious attitude. During the Independence war of 1857 the people of the area supported Bahadur Shah Zafar's cause. Now Baghpat has become peasantry-dominated. Sugarcane is cultivated here. Mr Charan Singh who belongs to Nurpur was accepted as the leader of this area in the early Fifties by the local peasantry to check the growing influence of Mr C. B. Gupta. From 1951 to 1967, Mr K. C. Sharma who belonged to the Chaudhury's faction in the Congress was the MP from Baghpat. During the 1967 anti-Congress wave, Arya Samaj leader, Mr Raghubir Singh Shastri, defeated Mr K. C. Sharma. In 1969 Mr Shastri joined the newly-formed BKD. In the 1971 elections Ramchandra Vikal (Congress) defeated Mr Shastri. At that time even the jats voted against him because he had involved himself in village rivalry and factionalism. Mr Vikal, a prominent gujjar leader was a Minister in UP's SVD Ministry led by Mr Charan Singh. In the March 1977 elections Mr Charan Singh defeated Mr Vikal with a margin of more than 1,20,000 votes.

Baghpat Parliamentary constituency consists of five Assembly constituencies—Chaprauli, Baghpat, Barnawa, Rohta and Khekra. Chaprauli constituency consists of more than 50 per cent jat voters and harijan voters are less than seven per cent. The Muslims have always voted for Charan Singh. Muslims of this area are middle-class peasants who identify themselves with the jats. Charan Singh represented this Assembly constituency from 1951 to 1977. Barnawa has also been an easy constituency for Charan Singh. Rohta has traditionally been the Chaudhury's seat except for 1974 when Mr H. N. Bahuguna got Mr Ramjilal Sahayak elected from this seat.

Khekra is a gujjar dominated constituency and Charan Singh has always got his man elected from this seat by putting up a gujjar candidate.

But the most controversial and important Assembly seat of this Parliamentary constituency is Baghpat. To understand the coming elections one has to go back to 1957 and 1967. In 1957, Har Keoyal Singh, one of the lieutenants of the Chaudhury, was defeated by Acharya Dipankar, a CPI leader who had contested the election as an Independent candidate. Mr C. B. Gupta had supported him clandestinely. In the 1962 elections Mr Moolchand Shastri, who was picked up by Mr C. B. Gupta to finish Mr Charan Singh in local politics, defeated Acharya Dipankar in 1967. Shastri was a sworn enemy of Chaudhury Charan Singh, because he had started to consolidate the peasantry of the State. However, Mr Shastri couldn't match the charisma of the Chaudhury among the farmers. Then Mr Gupta, a clever strategist, picked up Nawab Shaukat Hamid Khan of Baghpat. The Nawab was coaxed into politics. The Nawab had no intention of challenging Charan Singh's supremacy. He lost the election and this was a great shock for him. The Nawab of Baghpat died in 1969 and his wife,

the Begum, was convinced that her young husband had died because of his defeat in the Assembly elections and the Chaudhury's men were responsible. Since then she has been itching for revenge. During the 1969 mid-term Assembly poll in UP a well-known Muslim leader contested the Baghpat seat as a BKD candidate. The Congress candidate was an unknown Vikram Singh. On the eve of the polls Vikram Singh's supporters contacted Muslim families and told them: "Begum Sahiba nay-intaqam manga hai, wo BKD ki har chahti hain." (The Begum is seeking revenge: she wants the BKD defeated). And the BKD candidate, a well-known Muslim leader of Kandhlay lost the election since he could not muster Muslim votes.

In 1974, nobody from the BKD was ready to contest the Baghpat seat. Eventually, a young BKD worker offered himself as a candidate. Chaudhury Charan Singh was not sure about his prospects. But the candidate was confident. He was Mr Satyapal Malik who is now the All-India Secretary of the Lok Dal. Mr Malik's uncle, Mr Uday Bhan Singh was the Congress (O) candidate for the same seat in 1974. He was one of the closest followers of the Begum of Baghpat. But Mr Malik did not lose hope. He was facing the formidable Acharya Dipankar and his own uncle, Uday Bhan Singh, who was an influential jat. Mr Malik started to work among muslims. He also started making contacts with the Nawab's family. He befriended Kaukab Hamid, son of the late Nawab. And the result was that in the last days of electioneering, the Nawab's family remained non-committal. And Satyapal Malik won this seat.

In March 1977, Mrs Indira Gandhi visited the Begum and had a chat with her. In spite of the visit of important muslim leaders and atrocities on muslims during the Emergency, the muslims of Baghpat did not vote for Chaudhury Charan Singh, though muslims of the other Assembly constituencies supported him. The Chaudhury won the election by a big margin. However, his lead in the Baghpat Assembly segment was a meagre three thousand.

Baghpat is once again in the news. For Charan Singh, muslim votes are very crucial in this Lok Sabha constituency. And Baghpat is the citadel of muslim voters. All three Parties -- Congress (I), Lok Dal and Janata Party—have offered Lok Sabha seats to the Nawab's family. The Congress (I) and the Janata Party tried to persuade the Begum of Baghpat to contest against Mr Charan Singh and both Parties had promised to accept her as a common candidate. The Lok Dal offered the Meerut seat to her son, Kaukab Hamid Khan.

Krishna Murari Kishor



The Begum declined the offer and advised her son to avoid politics and he was also not ready to contest as a Lok Dal candidate. In the meantime, the influential Jats of Baghpat have started to appease the young Kaukab Hamid Khan. Recently, he was elected director of the sugar mill in Baghpat, with the help of Charan Singh's local supporters. This is where Satyapal Malik comes in. Suddenly, he was made the All-India Secretary of the Lok Dal after being in the wilderness for three years. Why? Because he was the only person in the Lok Dal camp who could pacify the Nawab's family. Mr Malik met Kaukab Hamid Khan several times and advised him to remain neutral in the elections. According to reliable sources, Mr K. H. Khan has promised not to oppose Mr Charan Singh. If Mr Malik's efforts are successful he would be the chief architect of Mr Charan Singh's victory. If the Nawab's family remains neutral then the Muslims in the Lok Sabha constituency are determined to vote for the Chaudhury. But it is a big if. This might be due to Mr Abdul Rashid who is still one of the campaign managers of Chaudhury Charan Singh. Mr Rashid represents the contradiction in the Muslim society. Since he is not a high caste Muslim, the aristocratic Muslims are not ready to accept him. These Muslims and the Brahmins seem to be with Mrs Gandhi although the Muslim peasantry is with Charan Singh.

The Congress (I) has put up Mr Kam Chandra Vikal against the Chaudhury. Local gujjars persuaded him not to contest against Mr Charan Singh. This was primarily because for the first time backward politics has entered the minds of gujjars. They have also benefited from this backward politics. Mr Vikal was reluctant to oppose Charan Singh. He wanted to change his constituency and contacts were made between Mr Vikal and the Lok Dal. At one stage he was set to join the Lok Dal. But he was not ready to defect. Therefore, he wanted the Congress (I) ticket from another constituency. Later Mr Yashpal Singh's name was announced as the Congress (I) candidate against Mr Charan Singh. But on December 7, Mr Vikal was prepared to contest against the Chaudhury. He was persuaded by none other than Mr H. N. Bahuguna, who convinced him that the Congress (I) was bound to come to power.

There are two allegations against Mr Charan Singh made by local people. The people of Baghpat claim that Mr Charan Singh has intentionally blocked the construction of the bridge on the Yamuna in Baghpat. This bridge would have made Baghpat an important commercial place on the Sonapat-Meerut road. This bridge is a big election issue as far as Baghpat is concerned. The Chaudhury's campaign managers claim: "The bridge was con-

The approximate line up as regards caste in:	
	In thousands
Jats	160
Muslims	85
Gujjars	80
Harijans	80
Other backwards	20
Yadavs	20 to 30
Brahmins	40

structed in Nethala due to technical reasons. We even met the then concerned Minister, Mr Chand Ram, who consulted his officers and told us that the construction of the bridge in Baghpat was technically impossible. The Chaudhury's detractors are spreading lies." Another allegation was that the local police would try to stop voters who might be voting against him. A Janata

Party worker claimed that the whole constituency was in the grip of Jat intimidation. When I asked him the reason he said that out of the nine police stations in the constituency, six have Jat SDPOs while the other three have Yadavs.

The Brahmin voter is loyal to the Congress (I) while the bania voter is loyal to the Janata.

In the final analysis, the Chaudhury stands a very good chance of winning. Out of five Assembly constituencies Chaprauli alone may give him the lead of more than 50,000 votes. Barnawa and Rohta are also safe Assembly constituencies for Mr Charan Singh. His lead may be less in Khekra but he will not lose in this Assembly constituency even if the Baghpat Assembly constituency does not vote for him.

UDAYAN SHARMA

Bihar

Sasaram: Will it vote back Babuji?

SASARAM was the capital of Sher Shah Suri. Today it is a reserved constituency, from where the most well known harijan, Babu Jagjivan Ram, will contest as the Janata candidate. The population of this constituency is about 12 to 13 lakhs and it consists of 4,500 villages. Six Assembly constituencies make up Sasaram: Bhabua, Cnaunpur, Mohania, Shenari, Sasaram and Ramgarh. The whole area is agrarian. There are no big industries except for a small privately owned oil mill. There is a lot of unemployment here because of the lockout in some Daimia industrial units that border the constituency. Over the past there has been little Government initiative in setting up industries. The total area is around 25 lakh acres, out of which only nine or 10 lakh acres are fit for cultivation. According to Government estimates, about five lakh acres are irrigated. But due to power and water shortages, only 13 per cent can be irrigated.

A number of irrigation projects have been formulated, but nothing has come out of that. On June 7, 1976, during the Emergency, Babu Jagjivan Ram had inaugurated with great fanfare the Durgavati Irrigation project under which the Karmchat dam was to be set up. This huge reservoir would enable the area to tide over prolonged periods of drought. However, no work has yet been done. When the local people complained about this to the then Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Jagjivan Ram, he is reported to have said: "What can I do? The Bihar Government does not listen to me".

A village elder said that when the

Sone high level canal was being constructed, it was traversing the land held by one of Babuji's supporters, Jagannath Prasad Singh, who was a big landlord. Ultimately, because of Babuji's political clout, the route of the canal was changed which resulted in excessive expenditure and brought less benefit to the farmers. Although Babuji played a major role in the construction of this canal, the benefits were reaped by the big landlords. There is an acute shortage of power in this area and it is dependent on UP for its supply. For example, in the Chand-Chainpur block there is a need of 15 megawatts of electricity, but the area receives only three to four megawatts.

Sasaram is often called the hunting ground for landlords. Of the total population about 35 to 40 per cent are landless peasants of whom most are harijans. The area has witnessed bloody struggles: The Akori incident in 1975; the Buxara incident in 1977; the Kapasia incident in January 1978; the Vishrampur incident on March 25, 1978 and the double harijan murder case in Samhauta on June 22 and 23, 1976.

The district Congress (I) president and former campaign manager of Babuji, Pandit Girish Mishra, said: "Babuji wants the voters to remain economically backward. He has often said that he would get the votes if the electorate remained in this condition." Any harijan who has gone to Delhi has had to wait of several days. Babuji has spoken openly about these people: "They must have come for a job. How will I give them jobs? They think that jobs are in plenty". On the other hand, the moneyed



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people and the landed classes of the area get a chance to see him as soon as they arrive in Delhi.

I tried to ascertain how people in Bhabua Chowk in Sasaram feel about Babuji. Said a harijan youth: "Babuji has been in charge of a number of ministries—Railway, Labour, Agriculture and Defence. We had asked him to change the Arrah-Sasaram meter gauge railway line into a broad gauge one. Instead of the broad gauge line being constructed the meter gauge line was removed. When he was the Defence Minister, we asked him to set up a cantonment in Adhaura. He said that the rules would not permit him to do so." A brahmin said: "We don't even get drinking water here." A lady complained that kerosene was not available. And the farmers are badly affected by the shortage of diesel.

In Hamirpur village, in the Chand block, a few peasants told me that the food for work programme was riddled with corruption. In Surha village, in the Chainpur block, peasants blocked our path to complain about unemployment. The BDO who was with me had all the necessary papers with him. In anger he retorted, "Why don't you help in the construction work going on near the school?" The people replied: "The labourers from nearby places have cornered all the work. What are we to do?" While on the way to Durgavati, we came across a brahmin dominated village. Here the landlords range from those who own 500 acres of land to those who own just 15 acres. Apart from three well-to-do families, most of the farmers do not have enough to eat and there is general scarcity, owing largely to the drought. And the people are angry. A Janata Minister of Bihar said that he had visited Sasaram thrice but did not have the face to ask for votes.

In the Sasaram parliamentary constituency, there are 8.5 lakh voters. Harijans constitute 1.5 lakhs, brahmins one lakh, muslims 60,000, backwards 80,000, rajputs 50,000 and the rest constitute the other classes. There is a split among the harijans. The chamars are with Babuji, the dusads and pasis are dissatisfied. The Lok Dal candidate, Shivanandan Paswan, is a dusad and will naturally carry the votes of the dusads. From the time of the Samihauta harijan murder case, there has been a lot of anger. Most of the backward classes will side with the Lok Dal while the muslims will favour the Congress (I). Since Jagjivan Ram will be helped by Afsar Hussain Khan of Chainpur, he will get most of the Pathan votes. The brahmins will favour the Congress (I) but here, the only brahmin minister of Bihar, Lal Muni Chaubey, will help Jagjivan Ram. The rajputs, because of their leader, Sachidanand Singh, will help the Lok Dal in getting votes. But because of infighting within the Lok Dal its vote will be split and this will benefit the Congress (I) and the Janata. Thus Jagjivan Ram will face more opposition than in the previous elections. The Lok Dal candidate,

Shivanandan Paswan, a young leader, is quite powerful. The question which now arises is: Will either Shivanandan Paswan or Mahabir Paswan of the Congress (I) stand a chance against the personal stature of Babuji?

The electorate of the Parliamentary constituency is divided among the pro-Jagjivan Ram and the anti-Jagjivan Ram blocks. The appearance of the Congress (I) candidate on the scene should be judged from this angle. It should be remembered that the Congress (I) candidate Mr Mahabir Paswan had contested as the Congress (I) candidate in 1971 and had been defeated by Babuji. The contest in Sasaram will be a triangular and tough one. The question then is: Who will suffer most due to Mahabir Paswan contesting the election, Mr Jagjivan Ram or Mr Shivanandan Paswan? Mr Mahabir Paswan is a dusad like Shivanandan Paswan. It can be safely assumed that Mr. Mahabir Paswan will get around 30 to 40 thousand of his community's votes. Further, he has some influence among the pasis and has some backward pockets at his command. The chances of Mr

Shivanandan Paswan winning are slim and this will help Babuji. According to some people who see the situation from a different angle, both Mr Jagjivan Ram and Mr Mahabir Paswan depend on the traditional vote banks of the Congress. Babuji has already fought and won under an anti-Congress banner in 1977. Mr Mahabir Paswan has a good hold over these vote banks. Further, Mahabir Paswan as ex-Revenue Minister of the Karpoori Thakur Cabinet had gained a reputation of being honest. In the present situation, therefore, the Brahmin voters have gained an added importance and Babuji will have to wean them away from the Congress (I). Mr Shivanandan Paswan will have to mobilise the backward votes.

It is still not clear who the electorate is going to vote for in Sasaram. But it is certain that the election in Sasaram will be the toughest one for its contenders in Bihar. Babuji's path, however, is not going to be paved with roses this time.

ARUN RANJAN

Uttar Pradesh

Can a Rajmata defeat Indira Mataji?

RAE BAREILLY was in darkness when the motorcade bearing Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia of Gwalior roared its way into the town's narrow, cluttered streets on the evening of December 8. It was the Rajmata's first official visit to Indira Gandhi country. The Janata Party had done its work well and there were so many people in the streets that it seemed as if the town's entire population had decided to turn up to see their new candidate. The little bazaars and tumble-down residential areas that we passed through were lighted only with candles and lanterns and the air smelt of dust and kerosene and the people that choked the winding streets resembled the populace of a medieval kingdom welcoming back their ruler. The medieval effect was, however, successfully shattered by the motorcade—consisting of several motorcyclists, a number of jeeps, a truck, three or four cars and the white Chevrolet stationwagon bearing the Rajmata—and by the slogans that shrieked out of the loudspeakers—*"Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia ki jai. Bharat Mata ki jai"*.

By the light of two lanterns, under a shamiana that teetered in the cold wind and using a microphone that worked occasionally the Rajmata made her first speech in the town at the insistence of the people. Women

and children listened from rooftops and candle-lit doorways and men stood silently in the street. Many could have heard very little but they stayed on mainly to get a good look at the tall, dignified woman in her white sari who had come to woo them away from Mrs Gandhi, who had brought this obscure little town into prominence.

The overwhelming motive of the people that thronged the cramped, dimly-lit streets was curiosity. A silent, expectant kind of curiosity like that of a man being taken to see a prospective bride. Occasionally, along the route there were cries of *'Indira Gandhi zindabad'*. *"This is Indira Gandhi's constituency"*, yelled some youths. Elsewhere a man approached the Rajmata's stationwagon in which the lights had been turned on to enable people to see her, and said, *"I'm wearing a black turban to protest against your coming"*. She thanked him smilingly and said that she hoped the black colour would also prevent *'nazar lagna'*.

The Municipal Corporation hall was packed with the town's more important citizens, who had waited nearly three hours to hear her make her first official address. Three hours because the journey from Lucknow had taken five hours instead of the usual two due to the endless chain of spontaneous, street-corner meetings.



Mrs Gandhi, flanked by Kamalapati Tirthaji, and Vijaya Raje Sindhia signing their nomination papers

The hall was lit by two large gas lanterns and in its light glowed a picture of Mahatma Gandhi another of Feroz Gandhi, one that is rarely seen in other parts of the country.

If the majority of the people had come to hear the Rajmata out of curiosity they stayed on because they seemed to like what she had to say. "In those dark days when we were in jail if there was one ray of hope that kept us going it was the belief that the people of this country would not let us down. By 1977 we had given up hope, we didn't imagine that so much oppression could be overturned. We were proved wrong by the people—especially the people of Rae Bareilly who had the incredible courage to vote out a Prime Minister at the height of her power...I have come to bow my head before these people".

The Rajmata's impact lay more in her personal appeal than in the fact that she was a Janata candidate. This was evident from her first speech that day—at a dusty street corner on the outskirts of Lucknow. Her personality came across different from that of other politicians' so that when she said "Main satya ke paksh mein hoon, aur satya ki ujay hi hoti hai" (I'm on the side of truth and truth always wins) or 'I'm not here because I want to become Prime Minister but because I believe that I must fight against the corruption that has entered the body politic' the sincerity was evident and seemed to strike a chord.

Even at the Press conference in Lucknow she managed to face a volley of tough questions without losing either her temper or her charm. One journalist mocked her for saying that everything depended on god and asked her whether it was god or the Janata Party that was fighting the election. She smiled and said that in the final analysis it did depend on him. If she was fighting pollution in politics, why only Mrs Gandhi, surely there were others? "She is the one who started it when she betrayed Sanjeeva Reddy, in 1969

If there could be such dishonesty at such a high level was it not natural that it would spread?" There were the inevitable questions about her son, who, only that morning had publicly announced his decision to join the Congress (I). Her face reddened slightly and she said that she believed he had joined because he was scared of Mrs Gandhi.

Later, however, she admitted just how much his decision had upset her: "When I first heard that he was considering it (joining the Congress-I) I said, there's nothing to consider. If you feel that what Mrs Gandhi did to me, what she did to the people of this country was right, then go ahead and join her...this means that he believes she was right".

We left for Rae Bareilly after lunch. On the way she addressed about 15 meetings—some pre-arranged, some spontaneous. We stopped in dusty fields, beside old temples and in little, cluttered bazaars where old men with tired, wrinkled faces and dirty, barefoot children in ragged school uniforms gathered round to stare at the 'maharani'. Some seemed to listen to what she had to say but most just came to stare.

In some places there was a silent hostility that seemed almost tangible. In Harchandpur village, for instance, a group of villagers said with unconcealed anger that they had just come to see what a 'maharani' looked like, their vote would go to Mrs Gandhi. "Things worked during the Emergency, the only thing that went wrong was compulsory sterilisation. Nowadays you go to an office to get some work done and they just ignore you...Indiraji will come back like an aahndhi, nothing can stop her". The anger that people felt over 'nasbandi' has long been replaced by anger against the Janata Government and most people did not bother to distinguish between Lok Dal and Janata. But in Rae Bareilly the fight, it seems, will be between two personalities rather than two Parties.

After the 1977 elections the people of Rae Bareilly realised that they were

no longer special and they have not taken easily to being ordinary again. And here lies Mrs Gandhi's strength. The people that I talked to seemed to have a very pragmatic approach and were not overwhelmed by Mrs Gandhi's much talked of charisma. They wanted her because she had managed (they realised due to her position) to give them certain benefits. And then had come Raj Narain who had ignored them completely. "After Raj Narain who wouldn't want Mrs Gandhi back. I'm not speaking for myself but for 80 per cent of my customers who seem to want her back", said the owner of a cloth shop. Two steps away a chhotiwala said he was not at all interested in politics and further down the road the owner of a pan shop said he felt that Mrs Gandhi had only a slight edge over the Rajmata and that too because the Rajmata had never been there before. Many people resented the fact that Sanjay had been reintroduced into the political scene and said that it would go against Mrs Gandhi.

The Rajmata's first public meeting began as dusk fell in Rae Bareilly. The Janata considered it a great success. It was estimated that there were about 20,000 people there which would mean about half the town's population. They listened with considerable attention to what she had to say. Again, a factor that may weigh in the Rajmata's favour is a local holy man called Jai Guru Dev, with a large following, who was imprisoned during the Emergency and who has not been convinced by Mrs Gandhi's excuse that she did not know he was handcuffed and fettered publicly.

Local people say that the villages are staunchly with Mrs Gandhi and that is where the majority of the constituency's 697,000 votes (391,000 male and 304,000 female) are, but the Rajmata has yet to visit the rural areas.

TAVLEEN SINGH

Election Diary

Raipur, December 9, evening: In the hotel room

THE waiter's name was Suresh. Who would he vote for? He looked awkwardly at us, unsure of what response would suit us. No, no, we didn't want a doctored response. What should he do, he asked. We didn't know the answer; he seemed simple, and a good young man, uncluttered by craftiness or slyness or just falsehood. He was a little upset; he had just finished one stretch of duty, and was forced to stay on the night shift too because someone had not reported for work. He would have to work till six in the morning and return at two the next afternoon. He would get some overtime, but hardly much: his total monthly salary was Rs 110. How had he reached here, become an attendant at this hotel? "I was two when my father died. My mother went through tremendous hardships to keep us two brothers and a sister alive. Most often we did not eat, and our mother, that brave woman, she ate far less than us. We lived. When I was five or six years old, I went to work in a seth's house. I worked there for ten years. I used to get my food and Rs 10 a month. I learnt everything about housework, and I even learnt cooking. Now I can cook well. Finally after much effort I got another job with another seth. I used to cook there, and do housework, and I began earning Rs 130 a month. I made some clothes. But then about three years ago, my seth decided to shift to Bombay. He moved his whole household. He wanted me to go also, and I had almost decided to leave. Then I got married, and I decided that I could not go to Bombay with a family. My seth was very good to me. I went to Bombay for a few months. Then I came back. I did this or that; I managed to survive. Who am I to complain of being without a job, sahib. There are thousands of young men who have gone school and college and who are wandering without a job. They know English, sahib, and they have even come to this hotel to try and get this job which I am doing. I don't know how to read or write. I have never had a word of education in my life. I only know how to cook and do this work. When this hotel opened, I was lucky enough to get this

job; somebody I knew recommended me." He paused, looked abashed, wondering if he had said too much, taken too much of the sahib's time, perhaps been insolent in talking too much. But he had told his whole story without a trace of sentiment; a little sadly, but without self-pity or mawkishness. His story was not extraordinary; but such stories can never be stale, however often they are repeated. "There is so much poverty in Chattisgarh, sahib", he said. How could one ever begin even to understand the depths of the sadness in that statement? Who had he voted for the last time? "The last time I did not vote. I did not have a vote." Who would he vote for this time? "Indira Gandhi."

December 10, morning.

THE second most controversial nomination in the country was today submitted between one and one thirty in the afternoon when Vidya Charan Shukla, former Minister of Information and Broadcasting, signed the blue paper form in front of a suited collector at Raipur. "Vidya Bhaiya," as V. C. Shukla is known here, was intending to contest from Mahasamund, the rural constituency adjoining Raipur, from where he has contested four times before, and won each time. In 1977, V. C. Shukla lost from Raipur to the present I and B Minister Purshotam Lal Kaushik. Kaushik, this time, is also contesting from Mahasamund. And so is another former Union Cabinet Minister from the Janata Party, Brijlal Varma.

There were many tensions surrounding the filing of nominations today, the least of them being the ultimate one: who will win? Today, the big question was whether the returning officer of Raipur would accept or reject the nomination of V. C. Shukla, who has been convicted along with Sanjay Gandhi in the Kissa Kursi Ka case, and whose appeal the Supreme Court is currently hearing. All the three major partisans were confident of success tomorrow, when the returning officer will hear the arguments and make his decision on this crucial issue.

But there were other tensions today. The day began quietly enough. Dummy candidates for the Congress (I) filed their nominations. This was vital as there is some doubt about the Congress (I) candidates in both Raipur and Mahasamund. About V. C. Shukla we know the doubts. And the Congress (I) candidate announced

last night, Kanhaiyalal Sharma, has proved singularly unpopular even with the Congress (I) cadre. Mr Sharma was only a last minute replacement for the Congress (I) candidate whose name had been announced on Saturday, Mr Goreylal Shukla. But according to all indications, Sharma is as disastrous as Goreylal Shukla for this seat.

The Janata candidate for Raipur, Mr Devraj Surana, a local Jain lawyer, came at 12.30, accompanied by a small group of followers. They made some effort to arouse enthusiasm with vociferous slogan shouting, but could not succeed very much. All the supporters were wearing crimson tilaks—the more one sees Mahdya Pradesh the more one feels that the Janata Party's real symbol in this State is not the kisan with a haldhar but a crimson tilak.

Rumours said that Mr Shukla would come around one in the afternoon, as that was the most auspicious time according to a mahurat done in Delhi. At one, V. C. Shukla did not come but a handful of well-informed agitators in a truck (CPS 8871) arrived shouting "Vidya Charan Murdabad!" These were not members of the Janata Party, but dissidents within the Congress (I). There were not more than 20 of them, but they were well-trained, in slogan shouting. A few minutes later V. C. Shukla came with his "wedding procession". And as he went up the few steps, a confrontation developed between the supporters and the dissidents. Cries of "Vidya Bhaiya Zindabad" and "Desh ki neta Indira Gandhi" and "Aadhi rote khayenga, Indira ko jitayenge" were answered by "Vidya Charan hai hai!" A group of women who had come in Shukla's train gradually edged up to the centre of the melee (in the midst of which a lone policeman acted as a buffer), and they took the lead in the pro-V. C. Shukla slogans. The dissidents succumbed against this determined onslaught from feminine reinforcements. The dissidents were protesting against V. C. Shukla for not putting up a better Congress (I) candidate in Raipur.

At 1.30, V. C. Shukla left in a white and green Fiat, and by this time there were no dissidents visible. As one policeman remarked, this was the only nomination which had aroused some excitement and crowds. The only really unfortunate person was a pickpocket, who had tried to use the crowds to his benefit, and was arrested.

M. J. AKBAR



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Analysis

How the muslims will vote

Who will win the muslim votes? According to the 1971 census report, muslims constitute 11.2 per cent of India's population and are an important vote bank like the backwards and the harijans. Unlike in the March 1977 elections, the Janata may not get many muslim votes this time, a large portion of which may go to the Congress (I). SUNDAY correspondents report from various States.

WEST BENGAL



THE Muslim vote in West Bengal is fairly important, accounting as it does for 30 per cent of a total electorate of nearly three crore voters. West Bengal has been relatively free of communal

tension and violence in comparison to some other States and its politics is not unabashedly run along communal lines. Nevertheless, before elections a certain amount of communalism is definitely introduced into the politics of the State through electoral appeals to communal sentiments. In the matter of taking note of communal realities all political Parties are partially culpable, in greater or lesser degree. The communal political reality is underlined by the fact that in all past elections the Muslim community of West Bengal has tended to vote one way or the other. They have not steadfastly voted always for one particular Party, but the semblance of a block vote is there and hence the question: who will West Bengal muslims vote for this time?

The short answer to that, as far as it can be ascertained now, is that the Congress (I) has a definite edge over its main rival, the Left Front, in the matter of winning the muslim vote. There is an identifiable muslim population in almost all the 42 Parliamentary constituencies of the State but its proportion ranges between over 50 per cent and 25 per cent in 12 constituencies. These are: Raigunj, Maida, Jangipur, Murshidabad, Berhampore, Krishnagar, Nabadwip, Barasat Basirhat, Burdwan, Katwa and Birbhum. It is in these constituencies that an assessment of the likely behaviour of the muslim vote is crucial in determining the likely winners. Out of these 12 constituencies, only one had returned a Congress MP in 1977—Katwa.

Why has there been a sharp shift

of muslim sentiment in favour of the Congress (I) in West Bengal? An important reason for the disaffection of the muslims towards the Left Front Government was the CPI(M) is the riots in Chapra of Nadia district in June. Either before or after independence the West Bengal districts of Malda, Murshidabad or Nadia have not known any communal disturbances. The trouble always stayed confined to the industrial areas of Calcutta, 24 Parganas and Hooghly. Mrs Gandhi's visit to the area during the trouble there seems to have made a very good impression on the people there and they think that this had something to do in the return of normal conditions. People repeatedly said: "We do not want riots, we want to live in peace. This only Mrs Gandhi can assure." The Left Front's administrative credibility seems to have suffered on this score. Also, it was surprising how news of riots in one area had slowly percolated down at the individual level by word of mouth to the whole belt and even people not directly affected felt very personally involved.

Another important reason for the Congress (I)'s influence with the muslim electorate seems to be the presence of many leaders of standing of the community in the Party. The Congress (I) in the State is led by Barkat Gani Khan Chaudhury and the other muslim leaders in the Party are Abdus Sattar, Hazi Lutful Haque, A. K. M. Ishaque and Abdul Raul Ansari. Even the Janata and the Congress have leaders like Fazlur Rahman and Zainal Abedin, respectively. Against these names the CPI (M) has in its folds leaders like Abdulla Rasul and Hasim Abdul Halim. Not the same thing, really, in terms of stature. Of a piece with this is the comparative weakness of the CPI (M)'s propaganda machinery within the muslim community.

The Congress (I) also seems to have made some dubious gains on purely communal issues. A section of muslims seem to have held it against the Chief Minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, that

he has not attended the Id prayers at the Calcutta maldan, unlike previous Chief Ministers. It is immaterial to them that, as a very strictly secular person, Mr Basu does not also attend community pujas. A further sore point is the new law passed by the State Government banning the slaughter of cows below the age of 14. The age certificate for the cows can only be given by a panchayat samiti chairman or a veterinary surgeon. This, they feel, will only add to corruption and inconvenience people who, at least on Bakr-Id, consider it a religious obligation to offer sacrifices. Again, the role played by Mr Basu in January this year in resisting communal pressure on the cow slaughter issue is not noticed. In fact the line of campaign followed by the Congress (I) in the villages among muslims is no different from that followed by the Muslim League.

South of Nadia, in the Barasat constituency much has been made of the house of anchal pradhan Hakim Sardar being set on fire and looted in Panaita village. He was an independent member of the panchayat. The allegation is that a hindu CPI(M) MLA of the area was present when the incident took place. The Chief Minister has denied the last allegation but the rumour mill keeps turning.

During the panchayat elections the CPI(M) won mainly by putting up muslim candidates in muslim majority areas. Now many of them have left the Party for various reasons. It may be recalled that Mr Jyoti Basu was personally against his Party putting up candidates who had not passed through the discipline of the regular cadre. As the routine crop of corruption charges against some panchayat members come up and the CPI(M) also tightens up its organisation many panchayat members are finding their way into the Congress (I), Forward Bloc and RSP. In many panchayat by-elections the CPI(M) candidates have lost. The same is true with many school boards.

On the whole, for legitimate and unfortunate reasons, the CPI(M)'s influence among muslims on the east bank of the Ganga has declined. This leaves out significant muslim pockets in industrial Calcutta, 24 Parganas and Hooghly where the CPI(M) organization among workers is much stronger.

SHYAMAL KUMAR
CHAKRABORTY

TAMIL NADU

"For a person who claims to be a 'child' of rationalist E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker, MGR has done more harm than good for the minority communities," complained most of the muslim leaders met by this correspondent. The Tamil Nadu State Muslim League, affiliated to the Indian Union Muslim League, commands a good following among the 45 lakh muslims (roughly 8 per

cent of the State population). Breaking its two-year-old link with the AIADMK, it is now aligned with the DMK-Congress (I) alliance. "Our alliance is with the DMK, not so much with Congress (I)," Dr Syed Khaleefathullah, one of its leaders told SUNDAY. "Ours isn't just another unholy, opportunistic alliance," he continued; "During the course of the last two years, the muslim community in Tamil Nadu has suffered considerably at the hands of communalists. In this State, we have had excellent relationship with the hindus. In fact, one of the most famous muslim shrines at Nagore gets a great number of hindu devotees. But during MGR's regime, the RSS began its communal game in Tamil Nadu too." Raja Mohammed, a muslim minister in MGR's cabinet, is accused of taking no interest in the problems of his own community. "Soon after the Dharmapuri communal clashes in June this year, the local muslim leaders met him, asking him to use MGR's goodwill to bring about peace. But he was furious with them as they had also sought the help of Muslim League leaders." Why did the Muslim League break its old alliance with the DMK in 1977? "The DMK image then was very low thanks to the multiple corruption charges. And we were not quite happy with the attitude of Sadiq Pasha the DMK Minister who had behaved as if he didn't belong to our community." The alliance

with the AIADMK wasn't fruitful: the muslim masses weren't happy with the decision, particularly after 1977 Assembly election which returned one out of the ten Muslim League candidates, which clearly showed that the AIADMK workers had not given us real support," says Abdulla Hanif, a student activist.

Dharmapuri district has quite a substantial muslim population: in one pocket, ravaged recently by communal violence, which has 6,000 muslim inhabitants and 14,000 hindus, two muslims died in the riots and three hindus were killed in the police firing. This pocket had no communal trouble till then and the muslim leaders blame the ex-MP, Dr Periaswamy, an AIADMK man.

The rival Muslim League, known as all India Muslim League, seems to have little influence in Tamil Nadu: "They are too willing to be MGR's puppets", says Dr Syed Khaleefathullah. "One of our main grievances is about the waqf board: there have been too many interferences by MGR and in 1978, most members of the waqf board resigned and now MGR has packed it with a few business men who are prepared to play his game. I'm afraid the minority Muslim League will condone such acts."

Whatever the Tamil Nadu State Muslim League will say against MGR won't affect his ardent Muslim women voters in the rural areas. "They're still carried away by his

screen saviour image he has so sedulously cultivated over the years. The muslim women in the Thanjavur constituency seem to have this all-time admiration for MGR, and there's nothing we can do about it." Dr Khaleefathullah says.

ARTHUR PAIS

MAHARASHTRA

WITH the Lok Sabha elections drawing closer, the sense of urgency among the country's minority communities about their need for unity and consequently a better bargaining position, appears to have percolated down to Maharashtra's muslim communities. This urgency, however, has resulted in a lack of trust in the muslim leaders. Consequently the community has split and many small leaders have sprung up disagreeing between themselves as to who would be best able to fulfil the demands of the community.

Maharashtra's muslims, concentrated prominently in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra (between 40 and 50 per cent in the cities of Aurangabad, Nanded, Osmanabad and Parbhani and an average of 15 to 20 per cent in the jillas) as also in small pockets like Malegaon (2,50,000) and Bhiwandi (2,65,000), are perhaps for the first time in an election going to be divided. Going by the results of the Vidhan Sabha election held in



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May 1977, the Janata tilt had lessened perceptibly in the five prominently muslim constituencies, and it will be a difficult task for the Janata to repeat their past performance when they secured eight of the nine seats in Marathwada. However, the impression that remains after a tour of these areas is that there is certainly no mass muslim support for either the Congress (R), Aligarh and Jamshepur notwithstanding, or the uncertain Parallel Congress-Janata alliance. Says Bashir Nawaz, noted Urdu poet and resident of Aurangabad: "The tendency of the muslims to vote for the man they think will be strong enough to protect them will be the major guiding factor of the muslim vote."

One major phenomenon of the present uncertainty has been the emergence of many youth leaders in muslim groups, similar to the Dalit leaders. Mujahid is one such, a rather funny looking person, who has tried in the last eight years to start a newspaper agency, cutlery shop and photo studio. He drives a scooter-rickshaw, but is well known in Aurangabad for his success in getting institutional aid for scooter-rickshaw drivers. He is absolutely anti-Indira. "Indira Gandhi tried to make fools of the muslims in Aligarh over the Muslim university issue in the first place, and now she is again trying to fan the anti-Hindu feelings."

be full of insects and filth. At least during the Janata rule we used to get good food. *Bekari* and *phasaataad* (communal in-fighting) will be the two main issues for the muslims, and they feel that Indira can do the most for them in these respects. They cannot see through her lies and deception."

In Marathwada, a traditionally drought-prone and poverty-stricken area, the lot of the muslims is the worst. As many as seven talukas in Marathwada have been under continuous famine for the past 11 years, and the average muslim farmer who does dry-farming faces tremendous difficulties for nearly eight months in the year.

Malegaon in Nasik district makes for a considerable change in the scene. While the muslims in Marathwada owe their heritage to the Nizam's rule, the muslim communities in Malegaon and Bhiwandi owe their existence to the cottage textile industry and powerlooms. With 60 per cent of the population (including women and children) working in the powerlooms, the problems of the powerloom workers—who are totally in the clutches of a few unscrupulous 'maver-weavers'—are likely to feature as the central issue in the elections. Says Dr Khalil Ahmed Ansari, a small-time general practitioner but leader of the cooperative movement to establish a spinning mill for the town's yarn supply: "The person who actually mans the powerloom is never the beneficiary regardless of the profits made by the textile industry as a whole. Every five years there is a major crisis, and every six months there occurs one of those 'distress sales' where the wea-

ver is forced to sell for less than he is paid to make the cloth, merely to survive. This has to be the vital issue in the elections."

The uncertainty of muslims essentially stems from the fact that none of the Parties going to the polls are going to field new candidates. Each Party has made promises, and failed to keep them. The present splitting of mass muslim opinion is a result of the emergence of small cliques and leaders, who are propagating different solutions to the problems of communal tension, unemployment, language, insecurity and poverty. Haroon Sheikh, school teacher in Malegaon, a three-hour drive from Malegaon, was one of the most clear-headed people I met. He said: "By and large the muslims are happy with the Pawar Government. It is the Central Government that has created disgust among the masses. Charan Singh has no following whatsoever, and the in-fighting between the Janata and their failure to fulfil the promises of the 1977 elections when muslims had given them all their support is too recent to forget."

ASHISH RAJADHYAKSHA

UTTAR PRADESH

WHEN questioned about the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections most muslims in Lucknow simply reply: "Let us see". If one wants a better idea, it is necessary to meet them individually and ask relevant questions. Lucknow is the focal point for both sunnis and shias and a large number of religious leaders who control the two sects live in this city. Muslims all over UP abide by the decisions reached by the *ulemas* in Lucknow. In 1977, the Maulvi of Deoband supported the sterilisation drive and said that muslims stood to gain by this campaign. However his *fatwa* (religious order) was not heeded by most muslims in the State. A number of muslims whom this correspondent interviewed were of the opinion that any Maulvi whose decrees are influenced by political Parties, is bribed.

Old Lucknow is thickly populated by Muslims and the forthcoming elections hold more interest for them than the previous ones. The Muslims are even vigilant this time. In Bhadewan *mohalla* (locality) I met Syed Asaf Ali who said that the Janata Party has not fulfilled its promises. He was angry at the laxity of the administration and said that the Muslims had not lost all faith in Mrs Gandhi. I did not meet a single muslim who praised the Janata Party. Everyone seemed to believe that the Janata was responsible for rising prices and communal disturbances. Nobody's life and property is safe in the hands of the administration, appeared to be a common belief.

Bhadewan, Katra Azam Beg, Katra Abu Tirab Khan, Nandan Mahal Road, Cnowk, Nakkhas and Pichnara in

Ambabad is populated by poor muslims. These people who are economically inferior to the traders and educated segments of muslim society, believe that the two main issues in the coming elections will be maladministration and communalism. Mohammad Naqvi Farooqi of Katra Abu Tirab told this correspondent that the continuing presence of the RSS will mean that the Janata Party will not get muslim votes. He said that no one could guarantee muslim votes for the Lok Dal either. He was of the opinion that muslims were happy during Mrs Gandhi's regime. She could get muslim votes, he thought. Mohammed Imran however decried the 19-month-long Emergency and said that if Mrs Gandhi came back to power the sterilisation campaign could well be revived. Some muslims of Lucknow also expressed the desire of not casting their votes. Mohammad Hanif of Katra Azam Beg said that he wanted *roti* (bread) and not political Parties.

Raj Narain's anti-RSS campaign seems to have had a very interesting impact. The common muslim in UP believes that Jana Sanghi *banqyas* (traders) were responsible for rising prices during Janata rule. Similarly, they blame the RSS for the riots. The muslims believe that the honest people among the Janata left the Party to form the Lok Dal. Muslims seem to favour the Lok Dal after Raj Narain's campaign. It is however difficult to ascertain whether this has eroded Mrs Gandhi's popularity.

Syed Ali Zaheer is an important Shia leader of Lucknow. He candidly admitted that the Shias may not vote on the same lines as the Sunnis. Maulana Abu Tayyab Ahmed Miyan, a Sunni religious leader said that the voting pattern among Sunnis will be different from the Shias. Ali Zaheer hinted that the Shias could perhaps favour Mrs Gandhi while the Maulana did not rule out the possibility of the Sunnis voting for the Lok Dal. However both of them disowned the Janata without any reservations. Even the best efforts of educated muslims cannot ensure that the entire community will cast its vote in favour of one Party.

The Muslims of Lucknow will take a final decision by the third week of December. If Mrs Gandhi can erase the terrible memories of the sterilisation campaign, she will bag most of the Muslim votes. Otherwise, the Lok Dal could emerge as the favourite.

SANTOSH BHARTIYA

GUJARAT

MUSLIM votes in Gujarat will not be a decisive factor in the coming Lok Sabha elections. But in combination with harijans, tribals and poorer kshatriyas they could help tilt the balance considerably. The muslims in Gujarat constitute about 10 per cent of the State's population. Of the total electorate of

around 15 million about 1.6—1.8 are probably muslims. Another feature is that, barring Ahmedabad where there are about 350,000 muslim voters, in the 25 parliamentary constituencies the muslim electorate is spread out in pockets and numerically would not prove to be a decisive factor. Despite these factors, there were two muslim MPs in the dissolved House and both had been elected on Congress tickets. They were Mr Ahsan Jafri from Ahmedabad and Mr Ahmad Patel from Broach in south Gujarat.

It is the opinion of political pundits that Mrs Indira Gandhi commands a majority of the muslim votes in the state despite the Emergency. By this reckoning the Congress (I) is expected to get a large share of the muslim votes in the coming Lok Sabha polls. According to Mr Raoof Vallulla, an Ahmedabad Congress (I) worker, the apprehension of the muslims about the RSS gaining ground in the Janata Party will also help Mrs Gandhi.

A Janata Party leader, who did not want to be identified, did not think that the RSS factor would help Mrs Gandhi. While he believed that the fear of the RSS would play on muslim minds there were several muslim sympathisers and leaders in the Congress (O) faction of the Janata Party who had refused to be "misled" by propaganda. He pointed out that the lone muslim in the Babubhai Patel Cabinet is the Parliamentary Secretary, Mr Kasambhai Achhwa, who is a Jana Sangh sympathiser. The Jana Sangh had, in the past, made an issue of the absence of a full-fledged Minister of Cabinet rank from their folds in the 18-member Ministry. It was presumably pleading for upgrading Mr Achhwa as a Cabinet Minister. But it is a fact that there is no muslim Minister. Janata leaders point out that Mr Babubhai Patel would have had no hesitation in including a muslim in his Cabinet but the trouble was that there was no one to fit the bill from among the Congress (O) ranks in the Janata Party. For the same reason muslims have not been inducted into the Gujarat Pradesh Janata Executive Committee.

However, the Janata leaders have not been totally unaware of the muslim disaffection within their Party due to communal disturbances in the country. The Aligarh and Jamshedpur riots have left indelible impressions on the minds of the muslims of the State who have not yet forgotten the communal carnage of 1969. "It was Mrs Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, who had flown to Ahmedabad all the way from Assam to console us", said Abdul, a hotel waiter.

From talks with a cross-section of the muslim population, it was apparent to this reporter that Mrs Gandhi's charisma was still present in Gujarat, although it was slightly dimmed. Barring isolated troubles, there has not been any major communal disturbance in recent times

But the horrifying days of 1969 are still fresh in muslim minds and this may work against the Janata Party. And for this the Janata leaders are to blame since leaders like Vallabhai Patel, a vice-president of the State unit of the Janata Party, have been themselves aggravating muslims' fears regarding the RSS.

In the 1977 elections Mr Ahsan Jafri had won the Ahmedabad Lok Sabha seat by a narrow margin of 82,878 votes. While muslim leaders point out that the victory occurred despite the anti-Indira wave, supporters of the Janata Party in Ahmedabad said it was a marginal victory disproving the idea that communal feelings could tilt the balance. Congress (I) leaders, however, state that Mr Jafri was almost an unknown candidate when compared to the Janata Party candidate Brahmakumar Bhatt. The importance of the muslim vote can be understood if one were to look at the community's concentration Assembly seatwise. According to a rough estimate, barring Kalupur and Jamalpur Assembly constituencies in Ahmedabad city, of the remaining 180 Assembly constituencies, no constituency has more than 20,000 muslim voters. Congress (I) leaders, therefore, feel that the only way they can make the muslim vote effective is to make it act in concert with other sections of society —harijans and tribals. Together they make up more than half of the electorate in many places.

Janata Party leaders feel that the Janata Government in Gujarat has done a considerable amount for the muslims since it has implemented the recommendations of the Baxi Commission on the socially and economically backward communities. This will benefit nearly 23 sub-castes among muslims. However, the muslims' fears of the RSS would tend to make them vote for the Congress (I) or a locally known anti-Janata candidate from any Party. As far as Parties are concerned, both the Lok Dal and the Congress are lightweights for whom muslim voters may not have much time. They have an abhorrence particularly for the Congress with which Mr Hitendra Desai is associated since it was during his Chief Ministership that the communal disturbances of 1969 took place.

TUSHAR BHATT

BIHAR

BIHAR has 70-75 lakhs muslims and 75 per cent of them live in the villages. There are pockets where muslims constitute more than 25 per cent of the population. Bhadurganj, Kishanganj, Amoor, Jogihat, Rajmahal, Azamnagar, Madhubani, Sakri, Saidpur, Biharsharif, Husainabad, Kanaigaon, Nathnagar and Shaikhpura readily attract one's attention. In some isolated belts muslims account for as much as 75 per cent of the inhabitants. According to official estimates, 37 lakh muslims are

landless labourers, five lakhs are engaged in bidi manufacturing, three lakhs are rickshaw-pullers or daily-wage earners and another five lakhs eke out a living as handloom weavers. The remaining 20 lakhs are comparatively well off and live in the towns or own land in the villages. There are a few muslim landlords in Purnia, Katihar, Darbhanga and Champaran. Handloom weavers are concentrated in Madhubani, Bhagalpur, Ranchi, Darbhanga and Biharsharif.

About 50 lakh muslims in the State belong to the backward castes; nomads, rains, qureshis, mansuris and a host of others. Among the "forwards" are the syeds, shaikhs, pathans and malliks. Shias in Bihar are generally upper caste muslims. In the political field, Jabir Hussain, the State's ex-Health Minister, is a shia, Ghulam Sarwar is a raiin, Abdulbari Siddiqi is a shaikh, Ali Haider is a syed and Akhlaq Ahmed is a pathan. The prominent muslim leaders in the ranks of the Congress (I) are Ismaili Nabi, Nasruddin Haider, Muhammad Hussain Azad. The Congress has Abdul Ghafoor, the Janata Party has Ali Haider and M. Syed and the Lok Dal enjoys the support of Jabir Hussain and Ghulam Sarwar. Among these, none has the capacity to really galvanise muslims or influence the muslim electorate at the State-level in a big way.

Except in 1977, the muslims of Bihar, have voted for the Congress. In March 1977, they showed the green flag to the Janata Party but later repented. The Jamshedpur and Purnia riots just about sealed the Janata Party's fate as far as muslims were concerned. Therefore in the forthcoming elections, the muslims will have to choose between the Lok Dal and the Congress (I).

The job-reservation issue has created a cleavage among the muslims in Bihar. A significant number of backward caste muslims gained from the new policy which was initiated during Karpoori Thakur's chief ministership. Therefore, at least the backward caste muslims are likely to throw their weight behind the Lok Dal. The Congress (I) is however still a tough challenger to the aspirations of Charan Singh. Mumtaz Hussain Arfi of Isapur village declared angrily: "In 1976, 36 acres of land belonging to Ishwari Singh, a zamindar, was distributed among landless hindus and muslims. When the Janata Party assumed power, the administration asked us to 'return' the land which was then auctioned. We can look through such sarkari bandobast. This drama has been repeated all over Bihar".

Not very long ago, the Muslims looked forward to prosperity and happiness under a stable Government. This optimism has vanished at least in Bihar. The tide of events have forced Muslims to be on the defensive; security against communal riots seems to be uppermost in their minds. And with good reasons.

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Notes

RAIPUR is a typical Indian town. The prime means of communications is the cycle rickshaw crowds of which await me as I step out of the Bombay Mail from Calcutta onto Raipur station in the fresh morning sunlight, cooled by the breezes of early winter. Outside the station a group of women have created a fish market. They sit close to each other with pitiable mounds of tiny fish, the jhinga bought from ponds, fighting between themselves over customers and perhaps out of habit too. The roads provide evidence that Raipur is a busy and crowded town. Well stocked shops, quite a few Decolammed and shiny, a liquor shop comes into view. It has a notice: "Welcome fixed price". There are many transistor and radio shops, witness to the media revolution and the prominently displayed magazines are proof enough that Imran Khan, Sunil Gavaskar, Kapil Dev and Amitabh Bachchan are as much in demand here as anywhere else. One film poster announces that *Love in Canada* is being shown in a city cinema hall. I cannot make out whether this is a Hindi film or an English one. The poster could belong to either genre. Later I learn that this is a Hindi film apparently made in Canada. Good show!

THE transistor stuck to the ear is a constant sight. Cricket is a far more popular pastime on the fourth day of the Delhi Test match than the other Delhi test: the elections. I too, take a transistor on my professional wanderings to the houses of major or minor leaders, surreptitiously slipping away, for a moment from serious confabulations of major import to snatch a bit of the latest news about the exciting contest in which we are doing as usual far, far better in the second innings than the first. I am writing this on the morning of the fifth day and I have already placed bets that we will win. In yesterday's commentary, though politics seemed to have seeped in. Dicky Rutnagar, one of our best cricket broadcasters, in discussing Dilip Doshi and pointing out that Doshi has a difficult job as he has to take on the mantle of Bishen Bedi in the side, said it was like following Nehru as Prime Minister of India—the successor in the shadow of a large and dominating predecessor.

SEEING the crowd in Shyama Charan Shukla's house you would never think that the Congress was hardly a force in MP

His house as besieged by the seekers of power as any other. The telephone rings constantly. One call beginning less than a minute after the last has ended. Now is the time for the mechanics of electioneering to be organised: jeeps, posters, organisation of workers who will solicit the voters and man the trenches on the vital day when the fates will be decided—January 6. Shyama Charan Shukla radiates the confidence of an old warrior although he is not all that old—only 54—and looks much younger than that. Fifty years old is not old at all in Indian politics where life seems to begin around seventy.



WELL, if S. C. Shukla's house seemed a bit of beehive, then younger and more famous brother V. C. Shukla's house in Budhapara, Raipur, looked like a massive beehive in mating season, or whenever it is that bees get into top form and work feverishly to get the honey rolling. The difference was the difference between the Congress and the Congress(I). At VC's house, a traditional building in the old town, a stone's throw away from the municipal school in which Vidya Charan and Shyama Charan studied, and another stone's throw away from the Congress office in which the brothers found their vocation, a continuous stream of aspirants and *karyakartas* (workers) came to meet the man who is believed to have Mrs Gandhi's ear. When V. C. Shukla got on the Chattisgarh Express on Sunday morning, on December 9, there was a crowd at the station—not welcome him, but to protest against the Congress(I) candidate who had been nominated from Raipur. By the evening, the candidate had been changed following a diktat from the High Command, but the replacement, according to local Congress (I) leaders, was not much of an improvement. However, while Rai-

pur seemed to be exciting a lot of passion, the Congress (I) seemed totally confident about the fate of the Mahasamund constituency, in which V. C. Shukla is contesting Purshottam Lal Kaushik and Brijlal Varma.

THE real symbol of the Janata Party, at least in Madhya Pradesh, should not be the haldhar carrying kisan, but a crimson tika on the forehead. This is the trademark of the Janata supporters in Raipur, at least. When Devraj Surana, the Janata candidate from Raipur came to file his nomination in the Raipur collectorate on December 10, the last day, there was no kisan in his small entourage. It was full of traders, wearing the crimson tika of a Hindu warrior going into battle. A fellow journalist gave me the interesting information that during election time in Raipur, *gulal* (with which the tika is notched on the forehead) sells just as it sells during Holi, by the sackful. In Mr Surana's entourage there was in fact a man carrying a bag of gulal, and putting a tika on any forehead which would have it—not many in the assembled crowd of patient watchers were interested. Is Mr Surana representative of the Janata Party? I don't know, but he is a candidate. And among Mr Surana's other achievements is the fact that he put out advertisements during the Emergency saying that he had no connection with the RSS, and that he fully supported the twenty-point programme. Long live the Party which claims that it is not made up of either dictators or defectors, and that we can trust them.

TALKING of defectors, it might be interesting to take a look at the record of Mr Brijlal Varma, the Janata candidate from Mahasamund. In 1952, he was a socialist, and he fought and won the elections as a candidate of the KMPP. He retained his MLA seat in 1957 as a PSP candidate. In 1962 he lost on the same ticket. He won in 1963 in a byelection on the same ticket. In the same year, under the influence of D. P. Mishra, he joined the Congress. In 1967, he led a group of 36 other MLAs to defect to Govind Narain Singh to form the SVD ministry in which Mr Varma became a Minister. When in 1969 the SVD broke, Mr Brijlal Varma became a votary of the Jana Sangh. In 1972 he contested as a Jana Sangh candidate from Bhatapara, and lost. Well, he has not defected since 1969, at least, for which praise be to the Lord.

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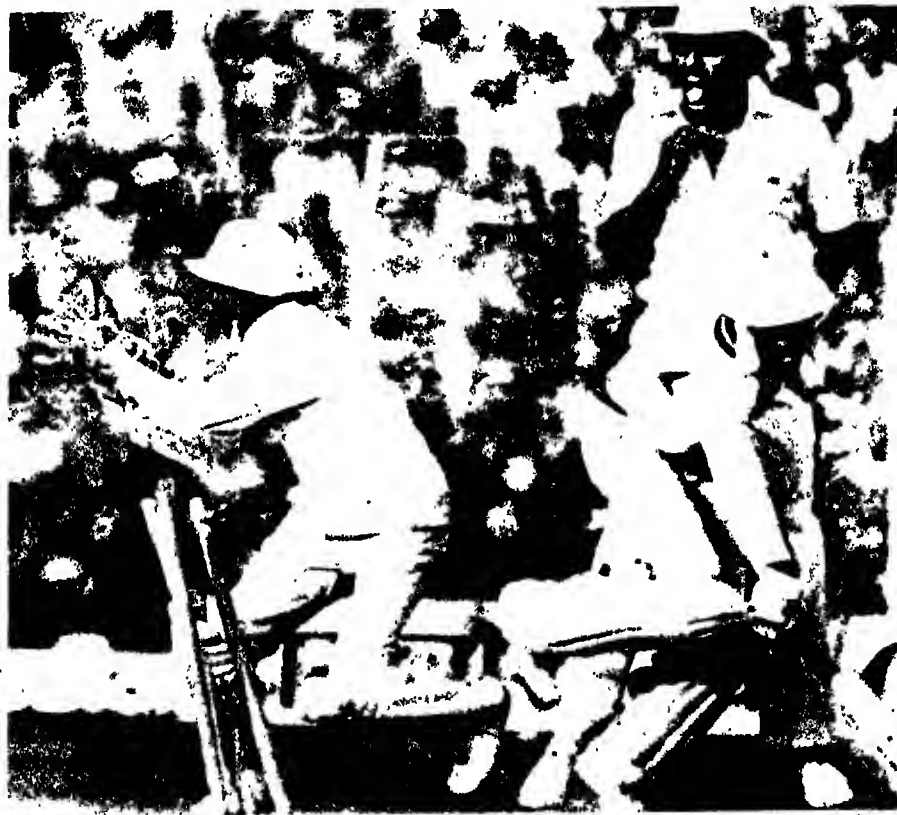
I THINK after the tension of the First Test one feels that all the players are a lot more relaxed and after weighing the weaknesses and strength of the Indian team we are more confident about what we can do and how we can tackle a given situation. We have made one change in the team, with Sikandar Bakht coming in place of Ehteshamuddin. In the morning, we went to the ground—and I think this is worth mentioning—for practice in the outer nets. The crowd was so keen to see us that it had turned out in large numbers for the practice. But since there was no way they could do so (as we were at the outer nets) they started throwing stones in sheer frustration. So we had to abandon our practice and come into the stadium itself and have some fielding practice. That shows that they were so enthusiastic, they wanted to see us all the time. We had nets, then we had a chat in the dressing room and while we were doing that we received an invitation from Dilip Kumar, through Ajit Wadekar, to spend an evening with him in Bombay. All the big names of the film industry are guaranteed to attend that function and I'm sure that most of the boys would love to do that. Our practice ended at about half past twelve or a quarter to one and since then the phone hasn't stopped ringing. I promised to be here but I was dragged away by the owner of one of the saris shops who was very keen to have some of the cricketers there. I had a look at some of the most beautiful—exotic I would say—saris that I have ever seen. We did a little shopping and the boys had the first day off after some time.

We had flown from Delhi to Amritsar and there was some dispute about which hotel we were going to be put in. Eventually we landed up at the International Hotel though we were booked in another hotel. Since the local authorities handle these things we accepted where we were put up. But the funniest thing took place after we agreed to stay in this

hotel. There was this gurdwara just next door and at about 4.30 in the morning we heard these bhajans at full blast. All of us woke up but that kept on going for the next two or three hours and this happened almost every day. Then we had the rain which is following us everywhere. I know that it's bad for us and it's bad for cricket but I believe you need water desperately and it seems that the Pakistani team has brought the rain and relief. I do hope that we do not get any rain in Delhi.

Since we lost the first day's cricket in Amritsar due to rain and since there wasn't much seriousness because the ground was saturated and the wicket wasn't really the best, the

Narrow miss for Asif Iqbal



Nikhil Bhattacharya

boys decided that since Muharram coincided with the day off, they would cross the border to see their relatives and friends. Most of the boys went across and came back looking pretty relaxed and happy. Those who didn't go spent most of their time watching films and for the first time on the tour I spent three days watching three Indian films. We did go to the Golden Temple and took a guided tour and it was quite fascinating to see such a beautiful place. We also visited Jallianwala Bagh and it was quite sad to read the history of it. That shows that in this world it's not just cricket that is so important. By and large it was a relaxing trip but now we are here for the serious business.

FIRST DAY

AS WE did in Bangalore, we had a team dinner the night before the game and prior to the dinner I had the boys in my room just for a few soft drinks. We were discussing cricket and we wanted to find out what thoughts everybody had on the Bangalore Test and, if there were any suggestions for this Test. Also, if there were any suggestions on how to proceed in this Test as definitely on their home grounds the Indians are a very strong side. Most of the boys were in very good spirits and while having a chat during dinner we suggested having a common room because of the amount of security we have on this tour. It's very difficult for the boys

to go out on their own or have time off.

I had a slight scare when Mudassar and Imran both came in late, the reason being that the doctor was having a look at them as neither of the two was feeling well. Both being key players, I was obviously anxious, but luckily it was nothing serious, just a slight temperature and sore throats. But the biggest problem—and we were discussing this in the morning as well—is the number of people who ask us for tickets for the game.

The morning started when we reached the ground and saw it pretty heavy with dew. It was a nice sight after the other places we have been to, that lush green ground. As Sunil spun the coin I called tails and I don't think Sunil really heard me and he was slightly unsure about who had won. Then I said I had won as I had called tails and he said "Did you really?" So I had to explain. You see, I firmly believe that the opposite of what I dream always comes true. I dreamt a couple of days ago that I called heads and won the toss. Then and there I made up my mind that I would call tails, which I did.

Full credit to Kapil Dev. Fortunately for the Pakistan team, but unfortunately for him, he did not have another bowler to support him from the other end. He had a magnificent spell, during which he got the best three batsmen. He bowled very well and very tidily and had been supported by someone else, Pakistan may have suffered more casualties. In the end we did manage to survive, and I thought the partnership between Miandad and Raja was great. I must say Miandad, the fighter that he is, produced runs for us when badly needed and it was today that we felt he was going to come good. He was a bit unlucky, I think, and his action showing the umpire that the ball had touched the bat was more one of frustration.

Majid and Zaheer were dismissed by two beauties, very good balls, and any good batsman would have struggled with those deliveries. We got the initiative back in the evening with Raja playing some really glorious shots. Raja and I scored about 120 odd runs. Tomorrow we have the new ball to cope with, but Inshallah, we shall get a good score.

SECOND DAY

INDIA took the new ball straightaway and it paid immediate dividends. I slashed at a ball from Karsan to give a simple catch to Dilip. I was very disappointed because I thought that if Raja and I could hang around for some time we could build a big score. The Indian seamers were bowling well and soon they were further rewarded when Kapil had Raja leg before, denying him the coveted 100. I felt very sad for him because I thought

he really deserved his 100. With his dismissal, and with the Indian bowlers making full use of the conditions, our dreams of making 400 virtually vanished.

We were soon all out for 273. My partnership with Raja had raised visions of taking our score to 400, but with the wicket here giving a lot more assistance, and with Kapil bowling magnificently we had to swallow our disappointment.

When the Indians came to bat, Imran bowled a trial ball from the end from which Kapil got all his wickets, but then decided to bowl from the other end as the wind had grown stronger. The first two overs he bowled were the fastest I have seen him bowl, except in Australia, and it was only because it was a batsman of Sunil's calibre facing him that Imran didn't break through.

Soon after lunch, Sikander got Chauhan out with a ball that seemed a bit and bounced a little more than Chauhan expected. I then went to Sikander and told him that it seemed that the ball was not only swinging but also seaming off the wicket and it would be good if he maintained one line — on or outside the off stump.

Dilip got a nasty knock on the shoulder from one of Imran's express deliveries and after that I thought he was a little hesitant to play his natural game, though he was still full of determination. Sunil, meanwhile, was playing confidently — clearly our No 1 trouble man.

Vishy majestically drove the very first ball from Sikander for a very confident four. Sunil and Vishy is the best pair that India has, and whenever these two are batting, the fielding side has problems. However, that problem was solved for us by a terrific stroke of luck when Vishwanath was run out. The prize wicket of Vishy came as a great delight to us. With three wickets gone, we suddenly realised that we were right back in the game.

Kapil bowled Bakht



I had bowled an over but with the arrival of Yashpal I thought I'd give Imran another burst. But after bowling three balls he felt a strain on the left side of his back and couldn't bowl any more. This was a very bad blow to us because he was bowling very fast. He wasn't very well and I think it was that and the tension which led to his severe pain.

At this stage, Sikander was in full bloom. The way he was running in and bowling, it was a pleasure to see him. With Imran and Mudassar out of action it was left to this poor chap to keep the Pakistan seam attack going and what a magnificent job he was doing. I went to him and told him, "Look, you are the only one we have, so do tell me when you feel tired," and his reply was, "No skipper, I am perfectly all right. I will keep on going". It was really good to hear this from a fast bowler and I am sure any captain would be relieved to have a bowler with that much enthusiasm and determination.

THIRD DAY

WITH only one Indian wicket remaining we were all hoping that Sikander would end the innings and take his ninth wicket, or his tenth really as the dismissal of Vishy was his doing as well. Although Sikander had a few balls left to complete his over, which was incomplete yesterday, he did not manage to do what we were all hoping he would. I decided to bowl to Doshi but my intention was not to get his wicket as I wanted Sikander to do so. Dilip, however, gave a very easy catch to Miandad at third slip and we all started walking off.

Majid and Mudassar opened our innings to consolidate our lead in the first innings. We were all very nervous for Majid. I was, in fact, praying silently and I think I was the most relieved person at the stadium when off the very first ball Majid took a single to get off the mark. Both of them played reasonably well. One felt that Majid was not at his best. Zaheer came in and he really got a wonderful ovation. In fact, I will never forget the ovation that Doug Walters always received when he came in to bat. When he came in against us in Sydney, a bikini clad girl got so excited that she even took off her top and we saw all the supporters catching her and throwing her in the air like a cricket ball. This was caught by the television guys and I believe it made good viewing. I was caught by the reception Zaheer got although I for one am waiting to see him strike the kind of form he did against India in Pakistan last year. He started quietly just picking up his runs along with Majid at a stage when we didn't want to lose any wickets. After lunch both the batsmen played the Indian seamers confidently until Kapil Dev was replaced by Roger Binny. He bowled much tighter and

was definitely more impressive than he was in Bangalore. The delivery that got Majid was one which a batsman of his calibre had to play and Kirmani took a very well-judged catch. Miandad wasn't well, in fact, he was sleeping most of the time in the dressing room. As we know, he is the clown of the team, a person who relishes all kinds of situations. In spite of the fact that he was not keeping well, when asked if he would like to go lower down in the batting order he was quite emphatic that he would bat in his usual place. It was sad to see him run out when he started as if he wanted to score the fastest hundred of the season because Javed is the person who could have given the score a sizeable boost. From 68 for one we were 68 for three and suddenly the aim was not to go for runs but to defend ourselves. Zaheer and Raja played cautiously, but it was not the usual Zaheer. He got his 50 and it was very noticeable that his first gesture was to raise his bat towards his wife, daughter and his parents. But he got out soon after tea and we were all very disappointed as he looked set for a big innings. I joined Wasim Raja at which stage it was more important to stay at the wicket instead of going for our runs.

REST DAY

WHAT happened on the rest day was a repeat performance of what had happened at Bangalore. Despite the fact that I had asked not to be disturbed early in the morning, I was awoken very early in the morning with a phone call from a very impatient journalist who wanted to see me before going to work. By the time I had finished with this and numerous other calls, it was time for me to go out to the swimming pool to give an interview to the local television people. After that there was a lunch which we attended. Once again we were given lavish hospitality, which we enjoyed, but once again I would like to point out that the manager and the staff at the Taj International have been excellent in the sense that they, along with the security people, made sure that we were not pestered.

After that lunch on the rest day I managed to have a peaceful day unlike at Bangalore where I had to struggle to have a moment to myself. In the evening we were delighted to receive an invitation from the President of India who was very kind to invite us to his residence. I was very pleased to meet him because when I was in college in Hyderabad he was then the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. It seems that he had read quite a lot about cricket and especially about me because he was asking me all sort of questions and I was quite impressed with his keenness about international cricket. He spoke about the present series, the series that is currently under

way in Australia and he also spoke about World Series Cricket and about the welfare of cricketers. I think that is very important because it shows that the Head of State is also interested in sports, as well. I would also like to mention that General Zia-ul-Haq is a keen follower of cricket. It is quite remarkable how he manages to phone us and convey his best wishes to the whole team. When Sikander and Raja performed their wonderful feats in this Test straightaway he sent his congratulations to the team and announced the awards of gold medals to Sikander and Raja. This sort of interest taken in the game by Heads of State can only mean that the game will flourish.

FOURTH DAY

THE day started disastrously for us. I lost my wicket without adding to my overnight total and then Raja, after playing two glorious shots, got out to a bad shot. Soon afterwards Imran followed us in to the pavilion when he swept Doshi into the hands of Chetan on the square leg fence. We were in trouble and instead of trying to build a big score we were trying to play out time, and pick up the runs instead of going for them. Bari, Qadir and Iqbal Qasim all did a grand job and so we did manage to set India a total of 390 to win.

Time was on India's side but we were hoping that early breakthroughs would help us to no end. With that in mind we started the attack with

Imran and Sikander but unfortunately Imran bowled only one over and in spite of taking three pain-killing injections for his back, he couldn't continue. This was a severe blow for us but we hoped that Sikander would be the major wicket-taker as he was in the first innings. This did work out to some extent as Sikander once again got the prize wicket of Gavaskar when he was caught behind by Bari. Naturally we were very happy as he is not just the sort of man who will score a hundred, he will stay there and score 200 or more. With other batsmen you can hope to get them out after they reach 100 but this is not the case with Sunil.

With this breakthrough we tried working out how we could restrict the India total. Dilip Vengsarkar, who played so magnificently under similar circumstances at the Oval, was a potential danger man. Dilip is a very fine batsman and with Chetan playing very well both of them looked very confident. Chetan played very well after tea although we did think we had him leg before but he had just managed to nick the ball into his pads. Eventually Sikander had him leg before, thus completing a fantastic achievement of taking ten wickets in a Test match for the first time which we all think he fully deserved after his first innings performance. With Sikander getting those two wickets we were back in the game and Vishy and Dilip tried to play out time till stumps were drawn for the day. India ended at 117 for 2 and I thought we did exceptionally to contain them to that score.

Some party!

ASIF IQBAL speaks to DAVID McMAHON

AFTER three days of cricket we were looking forward to a relaxing evening before the rest day. We were told that there was this dinner that both the teams had been invited to attend. We did accept, looking forward to a nice evening. But I must admit that I was very disappointed when we arrived. We were introduced to our hosts, but apart from shaking hands with them we did not see them at all. We were taken into a room of people where we could hardly move and where everyone just kept asking for our autographs. There was no contact at all with our host, apart from our introduction to him. In addition, the boys had played a very tiring game and we expected an early dinner. Instead I had to approach the host at about nine o'clock and ask if we could be given dinner. He was quite surprised. He didn't expect that the boys would like to eat so early as

his other guests were busy imbibing liquid refreshment. Eventually, we were told that dinner had been served for the players. We really enjoyed it as the food was really nice. But it was so badly organised that by the time Sikander Bakht and Iqbal Qasim had their turn there was nothing left. They returned without eating which I think is really appalling. In addition while we were having dinner there was an announcement to the effect that we would be presented with souvenirs which turned out to be suit lengths. It's a fine gesture, a nice gesture. But we would appreciate it much more if the host would instead spend a few minutes with us to talk to us and to look after us. I'm sorry that I am making these comments but I am only doing it for the sake of those people who want to invite us and who want to look after us and share the glory that cricket teams bring with them.

Testing time

WE went to the ground today looking for a win. There were three factors really that made us think of victory. Firstly, India had to score 273 to force a victory, but in these two Tests no team has made that many runs in the course of one day's play. Secondly, wickets had been falling fast in the morning session of every day in this Test, so we were hoping that this pattern would be followed today as well. Finally, we had the wickets of Sunil and Chetan in the bag as a bonus.

Sunil took the light roller this morning and immediately I thought: "Well, that is one pattern that has been broken in this match as every morning the heavy roller had been used, leading to the fact that the wicket played slightly quicker as a result". Sure enough, the bounce was uneven and Vishy and Vengsarkar were playing smoothly when I brought on Iqbal Qasim, who, to our delight, removed Vishy's off stump.

We were severely handicapped in that Imran could not play, which meant that I had to share the second new ball with Sikander. My main concern was to restrict the flow of runs but Dilip and Yashpal took India to lunch with seven wickets intact. However, in my opinion, the first session of play was a round to us, as the expression goes, because we did keep the runs down.

But our tension mounted indescribably in the final hour and a half when it was evident that India would perhaps score the required runs, although, personally, I thought it was going to end in a draw, albeit a very exciting one. With Yashpal the victim of an excellent caught and bowled chance by Sikander, the crowd went berserk when Kapil was promoted in the batting order. I think in their minds, India had already won the match. Kapil played a much more valuable innings than he had at the Oval, scoring off some really handsome shots.

At that stage we thought we just might be able to force a win but Roger Binny played his shots from the word go although I think he was a bit lucky initially. Dilip, meanwhile, was playing shots that really smacked of high class. We thought the game was slipping away from us so I brought on the pace attack again. Luckily, for me and for Pakistan, Qadir took a really magnificent catch, sliding on his back in the final attempt to dismiss Roger. With his exit it was obvious that the game would end in a draw but what a draw it was. Full credit to Sunil and his boys who really staged a grand recovery on the final day. I honestly believe that it was a wonderful game, with traditionally seesaw fortunes and I think it was played in the best possible spirit. I fervently hope that the remaining four Tests will be of such calibre as this one.



DO you know what I wrote about the DDCA?" asked Dicky Rutnagur on our way to Ferozeshah Kotla. "I described it as one Delhi slum that Sanjay Gandhi forgot to clear". The DDCA—for the uninitiated—is the abbreviation for the Delhi and District Cricket Association and it is rarely referred to without an abusive adjective preceding it. I, however, on the bright and sunny morning of the first day of the Delhi Test, was an innocent in the world of Delhi cricket and went to the ground with an open mind on the DDCA and on the much-bemoaned lack of facilities that Ferozeshah Kotla was notorious for. "Worse than bloody Kanpur", said one sports correspondent, "if Delhi weren't the capital, it would never qualify for having a Test match".

Fair-minded as I am by nature, I decided not to let these complaints and rumours of racketeering in tickets prejudice me in any way. They had bungled my pass and the entire management had disappeared from the face of the earth several days before the Test, but these things can happen, I thought magnanimously. After all when I met Vijay Mehra, a DDCA official and selector for the series, in Bangalore he had been more than cooperative and assured me that I would have no problem getting a working Press pass in Delhi.

So, I went to the Ferozeshah Kotla the first day with Dicky who had a spare pass. Once I find Vijay Mehra, I thought, all will be well and there should be no problems for the rest of the match. I met Vijay Mehra almost as we entered the pavilion and immediately mentioned my difficulties. He said, "Oh yes, yes", and disappeared so fast that doubts inevitably crept into my mind. I saw him only once more at the end of the day when he hastily introduced me to the DDCA President, Ramprakash Mehra and then disappeared once more, mumbling 'oh yes, yes' when I mentioned that I needed a pass at least for the last day. I never saw him or the pass for the rest of the match and had to rely on Asif to get me in but even this was prevented by the DDCA and the pig-headedness of the Delhi police.

Asif had asked me to come to the ground and send for the associate manager of the Pakistan team. Aslam Sanjrani, who would get me in. I duly arrived but, despite a Press card, the DDCA organizers and policemen that guarded the gates of Ferozeshah Kotla told me that there was no way that I could get in even to the inner gate and one policeman said: "If you don't move fast, don't complain if we have to push you out. If you wanted to see someone inside you should have already had a pass". I am actually in very august company. Abbas Ali Baig tells me that

he always has difficulties getting a pass despite being a former Test cricketer and even Pataudi once waited several hours to get a pass.

Charan Singh made a brief appearance on the first day. He left after depositing his wife at the ground. She is a cricket fan. Other cricket fans included the former Foreign Secretary, Jagat Mehta, the Lt Governor D. R. Kohli, various executive councillors of the Delhi Administration, editors of prominent dailies and of course hundreds of trendies for whom the match was clearly a social occasion.

I managed, at the end of the day, to snatch a short conversation with Mr Ramprakash Mehra, as the shadows lengthened on the field and the Pakistani team put in their hour of post-play practice. We talked in the pavilion with our eyes on Zaheer Abbas who was batting just in front of us, and I discovered that Mr Mehra has an amazing ability not to answer a question. It took him 15 minutes and I cannot remember how many questions to finally admit that the DDCA would make Rs 22 lakhs gross out of the match.

Off the field there was a Test of another kind between the Taj Mahal hotel and the Maurya who fought each other tooth and nail to acquire the Pakistani team for five days. The Taj won despite the Maurya hotel having wooed the team with an elaborate tea at the airport when they were passing through on their way to Amritsar. The Taj put in their share of wooing by sending two women executives all the way to Baroda to persuade Asif to decide in their favour. Asif's explanation for deciding on the Taj was: "We stayed with them when we first arrived. They were very good to us. We like it here". Some of the boys, however, said they would have liked to stay at the Maurya because it has the best discotheque in town. I must admit that I feel bad that neither of these hotels fought over the Indian team, who, I believe, stayed at the Oberoi which also bagged Gregory Peck, David Niven and Roger Moore, who were filming here. There was a party for the two teams to meet the stars but where film stars are concerned the real action will begin in Bombay. When I was talking to Asif on the telephone just before he left, an over-awed operator interrupted our conversation to say, "Sir, Mr Manoj Kumar is on the line from Bombay". Asif, in true Asif style said: "Ask him to wait, I'm talking to someone".

Delhi was not good for Asif, Imran and Mudassar, all of whom got sick. Imran, in fact, was considering going back to Lahore for treatment before the Bombay Test.

Delhi did not suit me either.

TAVLEEN SINGH

A PROMINENT politician has just arrived in the constituency of his choice to file his nomination papers for the coming elections. A split second before he can do so, one of his lackeys goes rushing to his side to tell him who is standing against him. The effect is instantaneous. The politician decides to withdraw to a safe constituency and when the lackey is asked who the second candidate is, he explains that it is none other than Test star Kapil Dev. Obviously not true, but this is one of the jokes that is doing the rounds in the capital as cricket has, for the time being at least, displaced politics as the focal point of every conversation.

Slightly over a year ago, Kapil could walk the full length of a street and no one would recognise him. But after his sensational debut in Pakistan last winter, he became a hero overnight. He was tall, he was athletic, he could take wickets, he could score runs and he was a good fielder. What more could the fans want? In just over a calendar year, Kapil has become a veteran. First there was the series against Pakistan, then one against the West Indies, followed by the tour of England, a home series against Australia and now six Tests against Pakistan. Twenty Tests without a break means a lot of experience under that hat of his, and Kapil is always willing to learn, as his record shows.

Kapil seems to reserve his best bowling performances for the Kotla wicket. In October this year, he wrecked the Aussies by taking five wickets for 82 runs which he bettered in the first innings against Pakistan in Delhi. If ever it could be said that a bowler rocked a batting side, it could be said of his performance when he opened the bowling from the Delhi Gate side and began by swinging the ball viciously, albeit outside the off stump. Majid Khan, brilliant batsman that he is, refused to fall for the bait, but he actually played only two deliveries before Kapil knocked his off stump out of the ground. Even the aristocratic Zaheer was cleanly beaten a couple of times before Kapil bent back his off stump as well to send the mighty Pakistani run machine reeling to 13 for two. Mudassar was the next to go when Kapil came round the wicket and had him caught immediately by Chauhan. In nine overs, Kapil had sliced through the batting, removing the top three in the line-up for only 17 runs. On the morning of the second day he came back with the new ball to remove Wasim Raja for 87 when it seemed as if nothing would shake him. He rounded off this performance to clean bowl Wasim Bari, ending with figures of 5 for 58. No wonder every school-boy wants to be the next Kapil Dev.

True to form, Kotla once again proved to be an inspiration to to Kapil. He rounded off his fine first innings performance in the drawn Test against Pakistan with

Photographs on this page by Srenik Selt

THE GREAT KAPIL



some more fiery bowling in the second. Kapil Dev and his countless fans, as well, will never forget the day the gallant bowler returned his career best bowling analysis of nine wickets for 121 runs.

His greatest asset is that he essentially is a team man. With Kapil bowling it is always on the cards that wickets will be taken; when he bats, runs will be scored; and when he fields, nothing will get past him. His contribution to the team has been immense. For a start, he was the answer to a lot of prayers for a fast bowler and he certainly cannot be faulted for lack of effort. When something is required of Kapil, he will keep pegging away with all he can put in, with the result that he is a very economical attacking fast bowler. Gone are the days when the Indian pace attack was a mere formality but this department now accounts for a fair amount of scalps.

Kapil's bowling is not just raw pace, a ploy that would burn him out in no time. He relies also on guile, on variation in pace and line. Kapil has learnt to capitalise on a batsman's weakness, to prise him out by forcing him into making the mistakes. Against Kim Hughes's Australians he gave India the invitational time and again by breaking up their opening pair before they could get going. The Aussies certainly had a torrid time with Kapil attacking them constantly and as Hughes himself has admitted, one of the reasons why they lost the series was that the openers never really got going. Which was simply because Kapil never allowed them to do so.

There is a certain school of thought, both at home and abroad, that says Kapil is being overbowled, that he will soon be reduced to the role of a hack bowler. But the fact is that Kapil, even if he bowls at a reduced speed, can get a lot out of the wicket. If he is feeling the strain of too much bowling at Test level, he is certainly not showing it and the batsmen who face him are definitely not having an easier time. A bowler who can score runs is an immediate asset to his team and Kapil has had a fairly reasonable run of successes with the bat, the most memorable innings being his flamboyant century against the West Indians in only his second Test series. Kapil is a batsman who improvises as he goes along: he would rather keep the scoreboard moving than keep his head down in defence. However, he is at his best if he comes in to bat with a big total already on the board which is just the sort of situation he relishes as his highest scores have come after the front-line batsmen have built up a sizeable total. This was proved when he scored 21 runs in India's second innings against Pakistan in the Delhi Test.

DAVID McMAHON

THE over-publicised Sanjay-Zeenat affair ended violently. The storm has passed away but one person simply refuses to keep quiet, Zarine Khan, now the victor in the battle to win Sanjay, is threatening to speak out all she knows and all that she went through because of the romance which has now fizzled out. Hell will break loose, one expects, when this woman who was scorned once, lets out her pent-up fury and the humiliation she keeps talking about to the Press. In strong contrast, almost poles apart, stands a mum Zeenat, determined to let the scandal blow over, thereby not letting it linger any more than it should.

At Bangalore, the first outdoor-shooting on Zeenat's schedule after the breakup she appeared smiling and unruffled, apparently unperturbed about the whole thing. On her birthday, which she spent with the unit of Brij's *Bombay 405 miles* and heroes Shatrughna and Vinod Khanna, who were especially all charm and devotion, now that there was no Sanjay looming in the shadows. Champagne, roses, male company singing her praises—what better way to mend a broken heart? Though this had been the longest and strongest relationship she has had, it won't take her long to recover.

A demure, unglamorous school-uniform could not suppress the fresh, sexy vibrations of young Padmini Kothapure's body. No, she was not shooting for a film. She was actually in school and breaking quite unknowingly, a rule for information and exit. But the teachers who corrected her, looked upon her with a bit of indulgence and good humour. On her part, Padmini flashed that ready ear-to-ear grin she is coming to be popular for. She is going to be a little superstar pretty soon; let her get through school and devote her time fully to films and see what revolution she is going to cause!

THAT reminds me of another young, sexy thing, by the name of Tina Turner. All the bold brash, thoughtless comments she takes are supposed to be taken as the irresponsible words of a child. But the way she carries on

especially during outdoor shooting, with co-stars like Chintu and Dabboo or with directors with whom she is so pally like Subhash Ghai, doesn't look like a child at work. Though you might say that she, like a confused child given a choice of special toys, cannot make up her mind whether it is to be Chintu or Dabboo or someone else. No, no, she has not fallen out with steady Sanjay Dutt, he is still her steady...but then you see, she is still a child!

SANJEEV KUMAR good-naturedly took in all the sly overtures meant to reach him via the condolence visits and telephone calls he got after his mother's death...made by some female hopefuls, who thought he might rush into their arms after the loss of his mother. Among these were the never-say-die efforts of dancer Jayshree T., who has been hovering for so many years around him (remember her famous technique of sending him lunch-boxes full of tempting treats?) but could not reach his heart. Even though he has told her that he has no intentions of ever, ever marrying her, she tried again. A ticking-off in plain words to the effect that he does not want to be disturbed during his period

of mourning, either by phone calls or in person, finally silenced her. Funny how he doesn't mind being disturbed by girls like Sulakshana Pandit, who is being marked as the girl he might marry some day. But poor Jayshree T. she is not even turning to anyone else.

DID you hear the joke about a top star who ran with his wife, to the shelter of a five-star hotel, to escape attendance at the massive Film Star Rally

staged by the National Party? After the meet, the same bigwigs of the Party came to the same hotel where he was hiding! Imagine after hoing up there the entire day, to avoid enquiries, and just when he was thinking of returning home in the evening, to find that the people he wanted to avoid had assembled in the hotel lounge! Not a very intelligent calculation, by this star, whose celluloid calculations don't misfire usually!

Dimple Kapadia



Umash Vyas

“WHY did you choose Shoba as your heroine in *Pasi*”? someone asked director Durai. “I needed a slim actress and how many Tamil heroines look so”, he quipped back. *Pasi* is one of those “realistic” films dealing with urban problems of unemployment and hunger. But Durai isn’t exactly telling the truth. Shoba is his favourite when it comes to low-budget films. He scored a minor hit with her as the heroine in *Oru Veedu Oru Ulagam*, and she is being featured in three of his forthcoming films. And in between, he goes around making glossies like *Mariya My Darling*, with Kamalahasan and Sripriya.

SIVAJI GANESAN and **Lakshmi** have agreed to save the successful music director M. S. Viswanathan. Though MSV is still busy despite competition from Messers Shankar-Ganesh, Ilayaraja and Shyam, he is jinxed as a producer. Some of the films he “promoted” proved utter flops while his own *Mangala Vadhyaam*, despite the magic of Kamalahasan, and presence of Sripriya, couldn’t keep the box-office busy beyond four weeks.

The new film MSV is working on is the Tamil remake of *Muggaddar Ka Sikandar*. Apart from **Sivaji** (who plays *Amitabh*’s role) and **Lakshmi** (who plays *Rakhee*’s role), the cast also includes Ravichandran, who has been trying to stage a come-back for quite some time. Originally the film was to be directed by K. Vijayan but now one understands that C. V. Rajendran will wield the megaphone.

Lakshmi and Sivaji’s last appearance together was in the hit, *Thyagam*, a remake of *Amanush*. The credit for its success was hogged by Sivaji and Lakshmi certainly knows it but since her market in Tamil Nadu is rather shaky (unlike in Karnataka) Lakshmi would rather act in a Tamil film, credit or no credit.

SUJATHA and **Kamalahasan** where cast together after a long gap in director C. Rudrayya’s *Raja Ennai Mannihvedu*. And one hopes that Rudrayya finally makes the film. He announced a film with Kamala-



Seema in a scene from “Paadai Marinal”

hasan some months ago; Saritha and Seema were also supposed to act in this film. Nothing came out of the announcement—except a recorded song.

RATHI DEVI’s career is slowly looking up. Though she could not really capitalise on the controversy regarding her first film *Pappathi*, slowly producers are taking more interest in her. Not really the “A” grade filmmakers but the makers of “quickies”. And

she has a couple of Telugu films too where she plays second fiddle to Sridevi.

NEWCOMER Sumalatha is really going places. Though her maiden venture *Tisai Marya Paravaigal* is only a mild hit, she is busy with a dozen films in all leading languages in the South. The most prestigious film she signed recently is a Kannada venture *Ravi Chandra*; she will share the limelight along with *Rajkumar* and *Lakshmi*. And

this girl who was used in advertisements for a soft drink is equally popular in Andhra.

SRIDEVI is getting more adulation and fan mail than *Jayaprada*, *Jayasudha* and *Sripriya*, the other successful heroines in Andhra. And Sridevi continues to be in great demand in Tamil Nadu too. She’s least worried about those films which were directed by I. V. Sasi and Krishnan-Panju but didn’t do well. Nor is she worried that *Solwa Sawan*, her maiden venture in Hindi, had a small run.

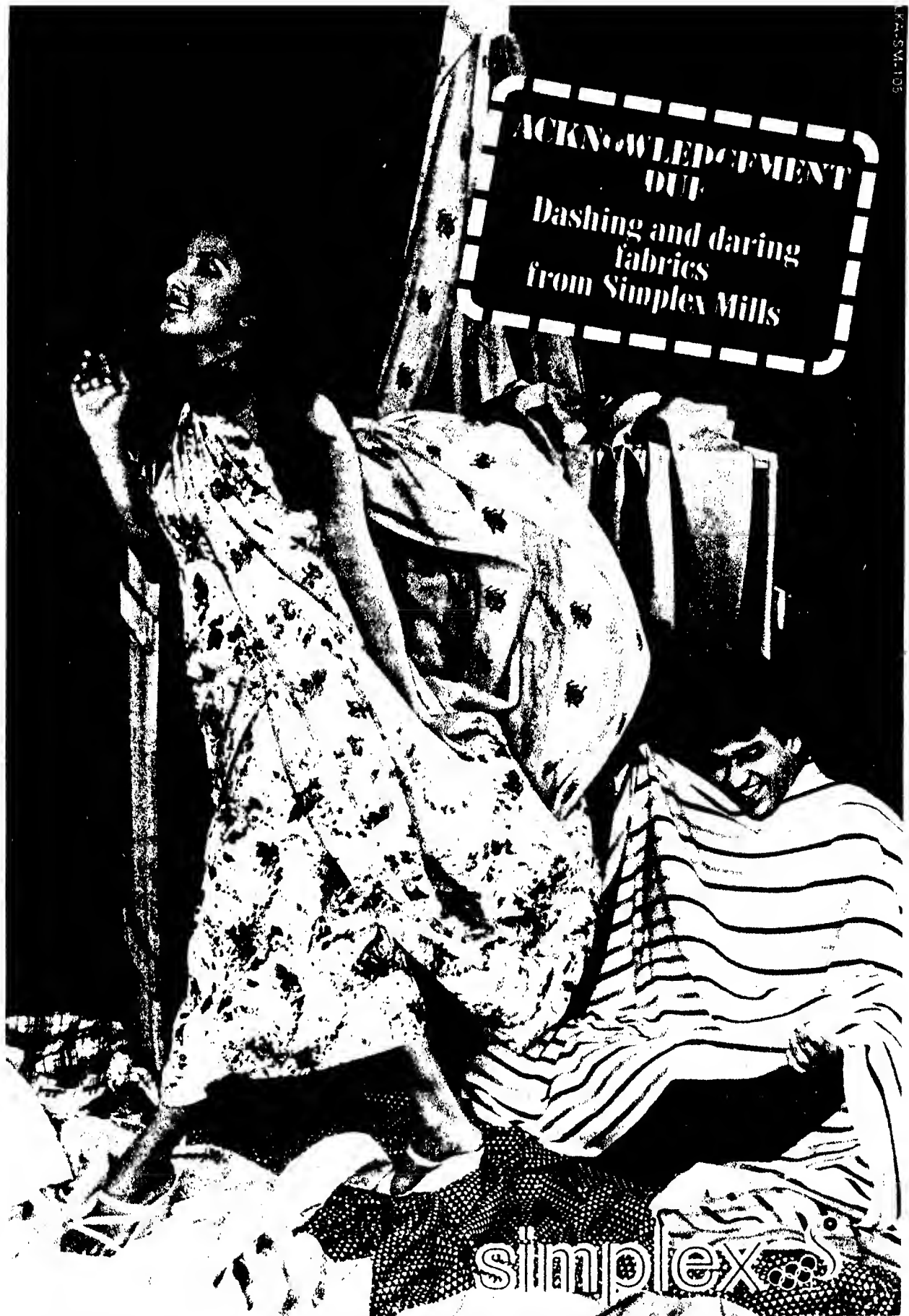
ACTOR-FILM maker Vishu Kumar’s *Mother* in Kannada is yet to be released all over his State. In the meanwhile he has completed a comedy, *Akanda Brahmacharigalu*. He has done a major role in it and there are many newcomers in it. This time Vishu Kumar has thrown in a bit of sex, courtesy *Suvarna*. Whether this will keep the box-office happy or not is to be seen.

NOT a single Tamil film released during the first week of December turned out to be a hit. Sripriya’s *Yerukku Yaar Kaval*, with Srikanth as her hero, was an average affair. Lakshmi and Matheran’s presence in *Nannagore* couldn’t make it a hit either.

Director Durai, quite a newcomer, came out with a major of *Paadai Marinal* but it is not doing well. It is not clear whether it is a flop or not. It is a bit of a disappointment for him.

display, a few bedroom scenes, the youthful appeal of hero Sarat Babu and a couple of hit numbers are responsible for its fair success. Its Kannada version *Kavali Daari* is to be released soon.

Some readers would like to know why this columnist called *Nool Veli* a hit. Now, a hit does not have to go for 100 days or for 25 weeks. *Nool Veli* was a lean budget quickie and if it lasts for ten weeks, it certainly is not a mean achievement.



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Beginning December 23

This week the Sun alone is in Sagittarius, Venus is in Capricorn, Kethu is in Aquarius and Jupiter, Rahu and Mars are conjoined in Leo. Saturn is in Virgo and Neptune, Uranus and Mercury are in Scorpio. The Moon will be moving through Pisces, Aries and Taurus from Aquarius.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) This will be a quiet and relatively uneventful week for most people. However, a fair measure of success is predicted for those who are willing to take reasonable risks. Matters relating to property will favour you. People in Government service are likely to have a good time. Your health will be excellent and sportsmen will win laurels. **Good dates:** 23, 24 and 27. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) This week will not prove as lucky as the last one. Take care not to displease your bosses. Make every attempt to keep your employers in good humour. Take the advice of friends and elders before taking a decision. Those engaged in business should guard against deception. Patience should remain your watchword throughout the present week. **Good dates:** 25, 26 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.



GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) You will achieve remarkable progress on almost all fronts. Your efforts will be praised by all and sundry. A secret source will prove invaluable at this juncture. Do not hesitate from asking influential people for favours. Guard against extravagance and over optimism; both can prove really fatal. The domestic scene will remain a happy one. **Good dates:** 24, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South-west.



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) Check extravagant tendencies in your own interests. You seem to be spending more money on trifles than ever before. Practise thrift. Keep away from controversies and quarrels. This is not the time to make changes. You may leave your old job and take up a new one. Do not depend on friends. Learn to use your initiative in important matters. **Good dates:** 26, 28 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 7. **Favourable directions:** North and West.



LEO (August 23 — August 22) You are likely to encounter serious competition on the business front and your private life too will be plagued with emotional problems. In these circumstances you are advised to be courageous and patient. Consult elderly friends and relatives. Inevitable delays and obstacles placed in your path should not disturb you. A valuable new friendship may develop. **Good dates:** 26 and 27. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 10. **Favourable direction:** West.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Things will proceed smoothly on the business front. A minor problem may, however, worry you to no end. Do not allow a person of the opposite sex to interfere in your business or profession. Take reasonable risks but forge ahead. This period is not ideal for romance or marriage. Speculation and gambling will pay rich dividends. **Good dates:** 23, 26 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction:** East.



VIRGO (September 23 — October 22) Let your own intuitions and hunches guide you. A timely and well-deserved promotion will crown a successful year. Good fortune will be yours in the days to come. Guard your health against seasonal changes. Someone in the family may fall sick. Medical expenses are likely. Do not mix work with pleasure otherwise you will repent in the near future. **Good dates:** 23, 24, 25 and 26. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South.



SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) Take care of your own health. The health of those in the family also needs watching. On the whole this will be a week of mixed fortunes. Conserve your resources and take steps to consolidate your earlier gains rather than make attempts to break new ground. For those in Government service, a promotion is in the offing. Do not lose your temper. **Good dates:** 25, 27 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 9 and 10. **Favourable direction:** South-east.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) Relatives will prove very helpful and their cooperation will contribute to the success of your plans. Learn to seek the advice of elders before making changes. Your domestic life presents a happy scene. A new friendship may lead to incalculable losses. Keep out of controversies in your own interests. **Good dates:** 26, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) This will be an uneventful week. A lot of good fortune is forecast. Do not be influenced by rumours about your close relatives. Your enemies are on the prowl. Make every move after careful deliberation. A sudden change may enable you to establish yourself firmly. Push your affairs to the utmost and forge ahead on all fronts. **Good dates:** 24, 25 and 27. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 6. **Favourable directions:** West and North.



AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) This will be a week of mixed fortunes. You will gain in diverse ways. It is likely that you will win lottery prizes. Deal carefully with property matters and treat all elders with due respect. A secret source will prove very helpful in the near future. This is the ideal time for negotiating deals and entering into new business contracts. **Good dates:** 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 6 and 8. **Favourable direction:** South.



PISCES (February 20 — March 20) You will achieve immense success on the business and financial fronts. An important change may occur in your career. Some people are also likely to change their residences. Your prospects, on the whole are excellent. Soon, a golden opportunity will present itself before you; seize it with both hands. Make hay while the sun shines. **Good dates:** 23, 24, 26 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 9. **Favourable direction:** East.

M. B. RAMAN

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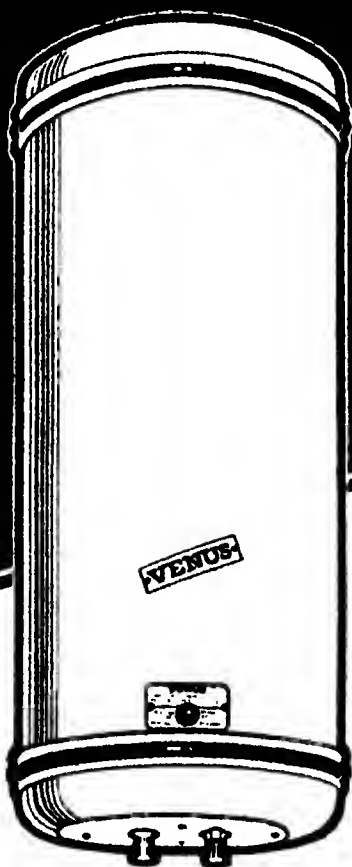
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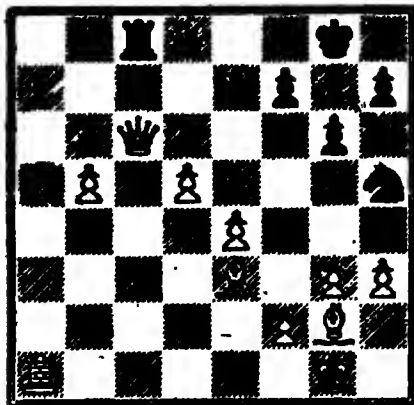
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chess

Bytasee (Black)



Hort (White) to move
Position after Black's 23rd move

A long weekend

TO SOME PEOPLE the weekend tournament is almost a way of life. One game Friday evening, three on Saturday, two more Sunday, collapse in a heap Monday morning. For someone who does not play tournament chess a schedule of six games in two and a half days may not sound excessive, but for someone who does (namely me) it's hell. Still, the faithful flock turn up time after time for their concentrated dose of chess—and enjoy every moment of it. So popular has the weekend congress become that one can find somewhere in the country a tournament almost every week of the year.

Of the multitude of such tournaments to have sprung up around the country, most are relatively small scale, but two in particular stand out from the rest: The Evening Standard Congress and the Aaronson Congress. Both are sponsored events with substantial prize funds and both attract huge entries whose numbers are pushing the four figure level. In one respect, however, the Aaronson congress is quite unique. All the overhead costs are covered by the sponsors and the money taken in entry fees goes into a Trust Fund which helps to finance chess events throughout the country during the following year. This is an excellent system, because it means that the presence of one tournament is helping to generate funds to assist the establishment of others. Clearly if this example is followed by other tournaments there is theoretically speaking no limit to the number of such events which could eventually grow up in this way.

The Aaronson Congress is entering its third year and is expected to be even more successful than the previous two. The sponsor, Ronny Aaronson, has always taken great personal interest in the proceedings, as has Dr Rhodes-Boyson, who has presented the prizes on both previous occasions. Vlastimil Hort, the Czech grandmaster who featured in the epic marathon final of BBC2's 'The Master Game', will be looking for a hat-trick of wins, having shared first place in 1977 and won outright in 1978. An example of Vlastimil's play at its very best.

White: V. Hort. Black: P. Bytasee.
International Tournament, Manila 1978. King's Indian Defence.

1. P-Q4, N-KB3; 2. P-QB4, P-KN3; 3. N-QB3, B-N2; 4. N-B3, Q-O; 5. P-KB3, P-QB; 6. B-N2, QN-Q2; 7. Q-O, P-K4; 8. P-K4, P-B3; 9. P-KB3, Q-N3; The queen is not so well placed

here, but it does force White to declare his intentions in the centre.

10. P-Q5, N-B4; 11. Q-B2, PxP; On principle Black should not release the tension. Better at once 11... B-Q2; 12. BxP, B-Q2; 13. B-K3, KN-B1; 14. N-Q2, Q-Q1; 15. P-QB4, N-K4; 16. Q-Q1 Preventing 16... P-KB4, because of the reply 16. PxP, BxP; 17. P-KN4. 16... N-Q5; 17. N-NB1 Hort's strategical understanding of these positions is very deep. He sacrifices a pawn to take complete control of the game. 17... N-KN3; 18. Q-N1 BxN; Sad necessity. He cannot allow N-KN3 (after 18... N-QB5; 19. N-KN, R-KN). 19. PxB, N-QB5; 20. N-KN, R-KN; 21. R-QB1, R-KR; 22. QxR, P-N3; 23. Q-BB1 Threatening 23. BxP! 23... R-B1 (DIAGRAM) 24. R-KP1 A magnificent positional sacrifice of the queen. Black has no answer to the rook, bishops and passed pawns. 24... R-KQ; 25. QxR, R-B3; 26. P-B7, Q-QB1; 27. BxP, N-K1; 28. B-R6, N-KP; Desperation. The threat of P-N6-N7 is terrible. 29. R-KN, Q-K3; 30. P-N6, Q-N6; 31. P-N7, B-B1; 32. B-Q2, Q-N3; 33. R-Q7, P-Q4; 34. PxP, B-Q3; 35. B-K3, Resigns, because of 35... Q-N5; 36. RxB, QxR; 37. B-R7 making a new queen.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge



WATCHING a good player, you may sometimes wonder why he wanders round the clock and doesn't draw trumps, as you were told to do in your youth. The reason may be that he is trying to build a picture of the distribution that will tell him how to play the trump suit when he does come to it. But the defenders can join in that game, too.

Dealer, South. Love all.

♠ K 7 5 4		♠ 10 3
♥ J 5 3 6		♥ 9 8 4
♦ A 8 4		♦ K 10 6 3
♣ 7 2		♣ Q 9 6 3
♠ Q 9	N	
♥ A K Q 6	W	
♦ Q 9 7 2	E	
♣ 10 6 5	S	
		♠ A J 8 6 2
		♥ 10 7
		♦ J 5
		♣ A K J 4

North-South would have stayed short of game but for a push from West:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♠	No	2♠	No
No(1)	double	3♠	No
4♠(2)			

(1) Not quite worth a try for game.

(2) South decides now that any honours his partner holds in the red suits will be well placed and that West's second-round double will help him to place the cards. In any case, it is always enjoyable to bid game after opponents have reopened.

West began with two top hearts, then switched to a diamond. South let this run to East's King and East returned the 6 of clubs to declarer's Ace.

Instead of taking an early view about the trump distribution, South took a ruff in diamonds, cashed ♠ K, and returned to the King of clubs. The position was now:

♠ 7 5 4		♠ 10
♥ J 5		♥ 8
♦ —		♦ 10
♣ —		♣ Q 9
♠ Q	N	
♥ Q 6	W	
♦ Q 9	E	
♣ 10	S	
		♠ A J 8
		♥ —
		♦ —
		♣ J 4

When South, still on his tour of inspection, ruffed a low club, East smartly followed with the Queen. Felling victim to his own machinations, South placed West with 1-4-4 distribution and finessed the Jack of spades.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



MANY of the stamps being issued to publicise 1979 as the International Year of the Child have designs verging on the coy of the sentimental. The Swedish Post Office has been less compromising. Its 1.70-kronor stamp, designed by Petter Petersson, features one of the hazards to which children in urban areas are exposed, pollution from car exhaust fumes. Another Swedish innovation is the issue of booklets of 20 stamps at the reduced price of 1-kronor each for use on inland postcards and letters. Rationed to two booklets per household, the cut-price stamps can be used only on private mail. The design shows a hand holding a quill pen but includes no figure of value.



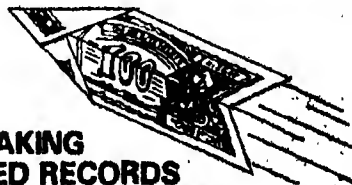
BETWEEN 1851 and 1854 the colonies of Trinidad, Barbados and Mauritius were all supplied with stamps in the same basic design, showing Britannia seated among bales of merchandise, with a sailing-vessel in the background. The choice of design was determined less by patriotism than by economy, for the printers, Perkins, Bacon and Petch, of Fleet Street, pointed out that if they used the same die and added the individual names later, the three colonies could share the expenses of production. In Trinidad the Britannia design proved so popular that it was used, with modifications, for more than 70 years. This handsome £1 stamp, issued in 1896, realised £90 in a recent Harmer's of London auction.

C.W. HILL

NATIONAL INSURANCE PRESENTS ITS PROFILE OF GROWTH

From 1973 to 1978: growth in critical areas triggered the company's progress

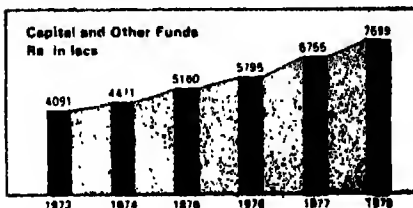
A technical team of experts ensures insurance requirements are met and compiles review reports to ensure suitable insurance cover. Besides, our field force assists the insuring public in the speedy processing of genuine claims.



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Quick and efficient settlement of claims is our forte. Therefore, business operations of the insuring public do not suffer. The claims arising out of the disastrous floods in September/October '78, in the eastern and northern regions, were settled efficiently and without delay.

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Our capital and other funds have grown from Rs. 40.91 crores in 1973 to Rs. 75.99 crores in 1978. This reflects in no small measure the stability of the company and its capability to meet any unforeseen catastrophe.

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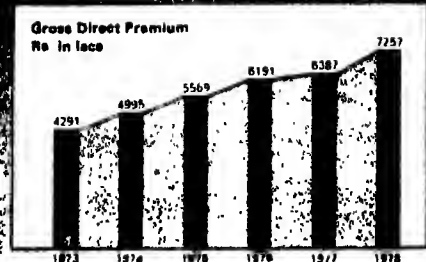


The reduction of the fire and explosion insurance rates means a saving in premium. This could be utilised in covering items currently under-insured or non-insured. It could thus, also mean greater safety for the insuring public.

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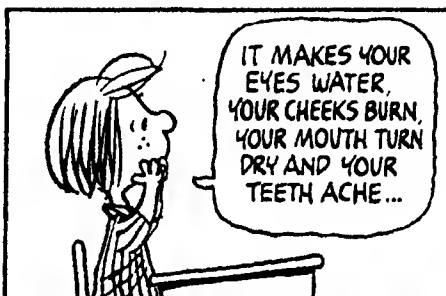
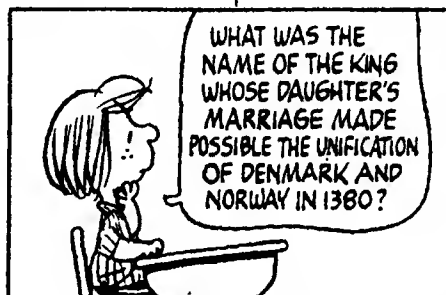
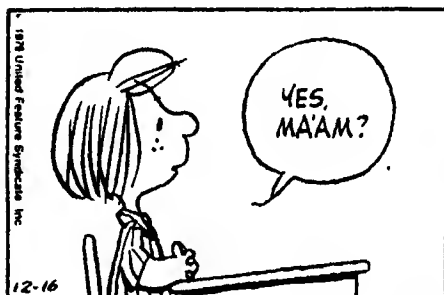
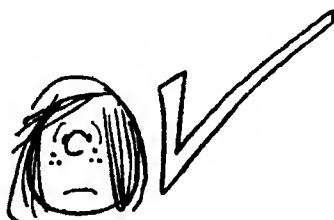


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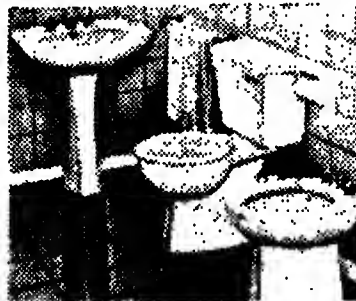


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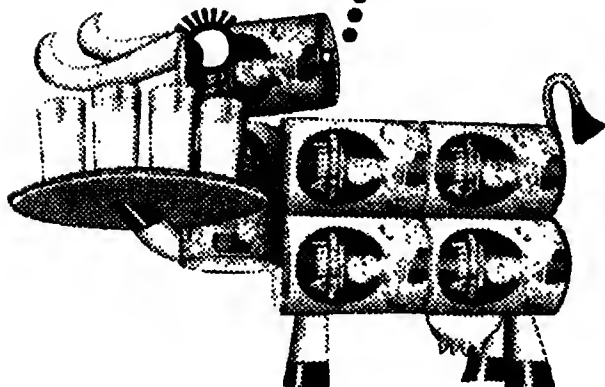
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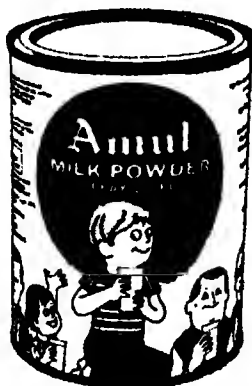
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NEW DELHI: It was apparently a case of jumping from the frying pan into the fire recently for Kishan Singh, a Railway Protection Force constable posted at the Delhi main railway station. When he received transfer orders for Ajmer, he staged a dharna outside the RPF office and managed to get the orders rescinded. But then, his wife rushed to the capital with her children and staged a dharna outside the RPF office to demand the transfer of her husband to their hometown of Hissar. She alleged that he was not sending any money home. The RPF authorities obliged her, too much against Kishan's wishes—*Times of India* (P. K. Jha, New Delhi)

JAMMU: Dhamchuk, a tiny village in Ladakh, will have the smallest polling station in the country with only two persons to exercise their right of franchise. The two voters are a wife and her husband. The electoral office in the state will set up a polling booth for the couple who are only residents of the smallest village. The couple also voted in the last Lok Sabha poll—*Times of India* (Hans Kumar Bhatia, New Delhi)

JAMMU: The death of Radha—a buffalo—has proved a bonanza for poor old sweeper Maru in Kalakam village of Kot-Balwal in Jammu division. Maru, who used to make ends meet by selling milk of his buffalo fell destitute when the animal died of "halqua", a disease among milch cattle. Maru, with five young children—one son and four daughters—could not afford to pay for the burial of the animal. Villagers came to his rescue and called some workers to bury the buffalo. While the workers were digging the grave in the kanal of land the old sweeper owned, their spades struck a metallic pot. On removing its lid they found it contained 700 silver coins—*Indian Express* (K. P. Rajagopalan, Bokaro)

AHMEDABAD: The oldest undisposed file in Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation dates back to 1930. The long pending case relates to land acquisition. A survey of pending cases conducted by the Corporation revealed that more than 184,000 files had piled up on September 1. Among them were four 44-year-old files—*The Statesman* (Aloka Mohanty, Ichhapore)

VARANASI: Hundreds of people participated in the funeral procession of Ram Das, a langur who died of cold. The body of Ram Das, who was brought up by a childless Marwari family was taken out in a procession which included an elephant. The body was immersed in the Ganga with full rituals—*The Statesman* (Bodhisattwa Mitra, Calcutta)

GWALIOR: An inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department, deputed to inquire into the alleged corrupt practices of an engineer, has been allegedly caught accepting bribe from the engineer. Deputy Superintendent of Police (Vigilance) K. B. Channa said a trap was laid to catch the inspector. He was arrested and later released on bail. The inspector had demanded Rs 1,000 from the engineer of the Public Health Engineering Department, who had agreed to pay the amount in two instalments. The engineer, meanwhile informed the Vigilance Department of the deal—*Indian Express* (S. Ramamirtham, Madras)

MADRAS: The 21-year-old elephant, belonging to the Varadaraja temple, Kancheepuram is dead, even as an appeal is pending over the type of Vaishnavite mark (Namam) that is to be inscribed on its body. The controversy and the subsequent litigation over a decade, as to the type of the Vaishnavite symbol to be applied, whether Vadagalai or Thengalai, have thus been given a quietus. Bought in the Nilambur forest at the age of about six by the trustee of the temple, Mr R. T. Thatchari, with financial assistance from His Holiness Srimal Andavan, the elephant became a subject of controversy. As it grew the Vadagalai sect following the then prevailing tradition, affix the Vadagalai mark. Resentment over this made the Thengalai sect take the matter to the court. Having lost the suit in lower courts, the Vadagalai representative appealed to the Madras High Court which pending the final disposal, struck a via media and ordered the affixation of the Vadagalai and Thengalai namams in alternative weeks. As the ultimate verdict went in favour of the Thengalai sect, the matter was taken to the Supreme Court. The animal had not been behaving for the past six months and fell sick about a month ago—*The Hindu* (R. Hariharan, Madras)

I SEE decadence everywhere: in Bengali life; culture, literature and language; in modern Indian culture; in English life, culture, literature and language; in Western life and civilization as a whole—Nirad C. Chaudhuri in *Times Literary Supplement*

SENIOR leaders without any compunction—I don't want to use the word shamelessly—jumped from one Party to another. Everybody thinks that he alone is wise and others are foolish and childish—C. Subramaniam

THE Congress (I) manifesto is a comic document. It is no surprise that there is not one reference to the Emergency in the manifesto—Charan Singh

I DON'T comment on what Mr Charan Singh says—Indira Gandhi

THE danger to freedom of the Press is not from political Parties but from owners—H. N. Bahuguna

HE (Sanjay) is the light. He is the answer to the country's future—Kamal Nath

I THINK the interest of the US, is with the Iranian people. If we continue to identify with a dictatorship, whether it is Samozia in Nicaragua, the Shah, or other dictators, I don't think this is a wise foreign policy—Senator Edward Kennedy on the Teheran crisis

I HAVE known how to swallow poison, for I want to build and not destroy—Jaggiivan Ram

THE Patriotic Front...are Communists, and I don't like Communists, whether they be in America or Rhodesia, I don't like them all over the world. I think (Communism) is a miserable policy and a miserable ideology—P. W. Botha, South Africa's Prime Minister

I WILL fight Mrs Gandhi through my Party candidates. I will fight her throughout my life—B. P. Maurya

MRS GANDHI'S constant theme of law and order means that she will be the law and Sanjay Gandhi will enforce the order—Murli Manohar Joshi, last Janata Parliamentary Party secretary

INTELLIGENCE-gathering is even more fantasy-prone than news-gathering. In the latter, you are expected to make bricks without straw, but in the former, to grow lemons without a tree—Malcolm Muggeridge on the Blunt affair in *Time*



Jai Guru Dev

WHAT IS TRUTH?

IN her quest for votes Mrs Gandhi has gone to every temple and bowed to every stone on her campaign trail that can get her some more support in the coming elections. If much publicised temple-going can bring her back to power she will not let it interfere with the niceties of a secular code of conduct that may have leaders stay away from all religious places. It was in search of votes again that she made the no-so-secret foray into the ashram of Jai Guru Dev in Mathura. Baba, who has considerable influence in Rai Bareilly and Amethi, was also visited by Sanjay for his blessings which we now learn were not forthcoming. Mrs Gandhi's conversation with Baba went something like this. When Baba said that even women inmates of the ashram were stripped naked by the police during the Emergency—Baba himself was in chains in jail—Mrs Gandhi first feigned innocence and later sought to transfer the blame to Bahuguna who she said was the Chief Minister those days. Baba reminded her that Bahuguna was now once again with her. This led Mrs Gandhi to say: "Yes he has come and joined me. But I really

do not know what he is up to." Significantly, Mrs Gandhi also told the Baba that "I will tell you truthfully that I have not even once spoken a single lie all my life". Baba was unmoved even after this!

A LITTLE SLOW

SHIV Charan Gupta was supping with the RSS-Jana Sangh elements in the Delhi Pradesh Janata Party while he was happily ensconced in the influential position of the vice-president of New Delhi Municipal Committee. The local Janata chief, Mr Vijay Kumar Malhotra, was for over two years always "Vijayji" to Gupta. He tried his level best to cash in on all this and secure a Janata ticket but when the central leadership of the Party decided to retain all the sitting MPs from the capital Gupta woke up. Rather belatedly he found that the RSS was one influence in the Janata Party which he did not like. Hence he decided to join the Congress (I). The whole process may be repeated when, as is likely, the Congress (I) also denies him a ticket. He will then again wake up belatedly to the fact that Sanjay Gandhi is dominating the Party.

THE KURSI WINS

AMRIT Nahata has a peripatetic conscience which within the last three years has taken him from the Congress to the Janata, from the Janata to the Congress and at the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, to the Congress (I). Mrs Gandhi seems to have been particularly unrelenting with him. She welcomed all and sundry into her Congress (I) but told the maker of the film *Kissa kursi ka* that he was not wanted "unless he makes amends for his conduct". That was about a month before Nahata filed his notorious petition in the Supreme Court contradicting his earlier deposition before it. Nahata may not after all get the Congress (I) ticket for the ensuing polls as that will make things too obvious. It may be recollected that he had



Amrit Nahata

abused the then Information Minister, Mr Advani, for his department's decision that the *Kissa* film was so bad that it was not deemed fit to be screened on Doordarshan. While he re-made the film during the Janata raj he did not pay the meagre fees he owed to some of the performers. What is more, he left the Janata to join the Lok Dal-Congress alliance but when he did not get even a junior ministership he became critical of the Party's leadership. Now for the last eight weeks he has been waiting to get into the Congress (I). Nahata's own recent behaviour would provide superb material for another film, this time on his peripatetications in search of a kursi.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

Dawn streaks the sky with gold. A million voices rise in homage.

Worship takes as many forms, as the people of India. As music and dance. As living sculptures on ancient walls. As an offering of flowers and incense and flickering oil lamps.

A sweeping stream of faith

From the sacred ice lingam of Lord Shiva at Amarnath in Kashmir, to the Meenakshi temple at Madurai, with its hall of thousand pillars. From the fabled temple of Somnath to the 500 temples of Bhubaneswar where once 7000 flourished. Everywhere in India, you will see symbols of a deep faith.

In the footsteps of Buddha

The message of the enlightened one grows in strength, through stupas and monasteries and cave wonders. The Bodhi tree at Bodhi Gaya. The celestial nymphs at Ajanta, the stupa at Sanchi. Prayer flags fluttering in an evening breeze at Ladakh.



The way of the Guru

Gurdwaras dot the landscape across the country, calling the proud and exuberant Sikhs to the way of the Gurus. Be it at the Golden Temple at Amritsar, or remote snow heights of Hemkund Sahib, near the Valley of Flowers.

Call to the faithful

The call of the muezzin echoes from a tall minaret, a thousand heads bow in silent prayer. The faithful throng to the edifices of a living faith, at

the Dargah at Ajmer, the Jama Masjid at Delhi, the tomb of Salim Chisti at Fatehpur Sikri.

Reverence for life

Mahavira took the path to austerity and founded a faith based on four fundamental virtues. His teachings are followed by millions and are enshrined in monuments like the Jain temples at Dilwara at Mount Abu, Palitana, Ranakpur and Calcutta.

The path of the Saviour

As early as the 1st century A.D. St. Thomas gave the world its first churches in Madras. Ever since, the path to salvation has led to the white-washed churches of Kerala and Goa. To the Cathedral of Velha Goa, where St. Francis Xavier lies embalmed, and thousands of other destinations.

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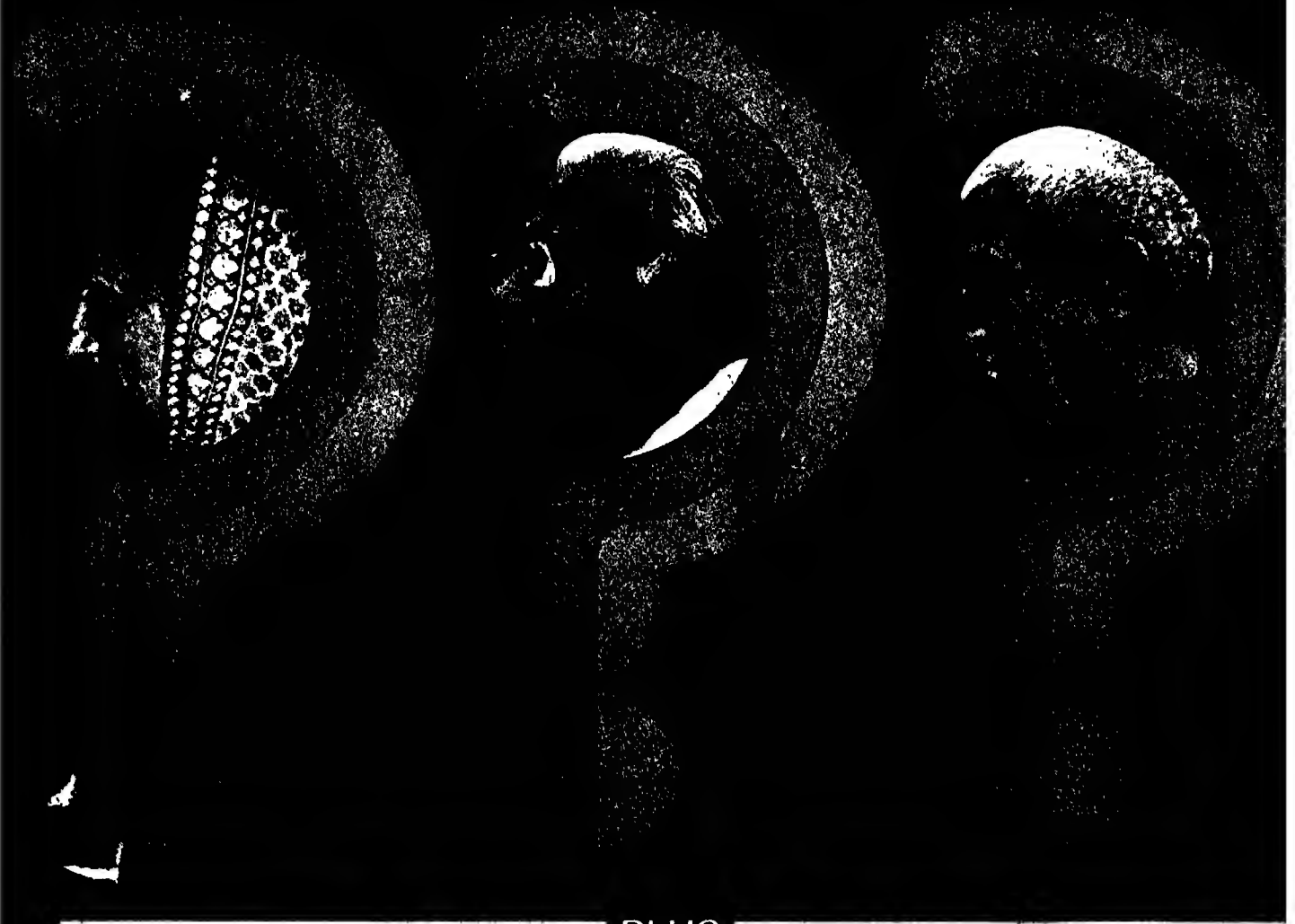
Pilgrim's Progress

STAIRS



^{30.12.79}
SPECIAL ELECTION ISSUE

WILL ANYONE WIN?



PLUS

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Mrs Indira
Gandhi**

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leaders will be
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The Farm Clinic Project, launched by Syndicate Bank in Hosala village (Udupi Taluk, Dahanu District, Karnataka State) has given concrete shape to the concept of integrated rural development.

Syndicate Bank's rich experience over the years in agricultural financing - and its commitment - has proved that the ideal solution to the problems of small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers lies in providing them with inputs and services under one roof.

First of its kind

The Farm Clinic at Hosala, the first of its kind in India organised in 1973 by the Bank in collaboration with the Syndicate Agricultural Foundation, a farmers' organisation promoted by the Bank, is also taking care of the credit needs of the farmers for children's education, medical treatment, housing etc.

Farm Clinic Projects The Hosala Experiment and Syndicate Bank

The Farm Clinic provides a wide range of services to the farmers to modernise agriculture and to increase agricultural production. Inputs like implements, fertilisers, pesticides, seeds saplings are made available to the farmers at the Clinic. Besides, the services of the Bank's Farm Representative, are at hand.

Hosala is a small village north of Udupi—a village bristling with problems typical of rural India. The area is rain-fed. The soil is low fertility/latent type. Irrigation facilities not worth the name. Employment potential of agriculture very limited.

Action Programme

Syndicate Bank's action programme started with a comprehensive survey of Hosala, Honahalli and Kachur villages.

The Bank's technical personnel held detailed discussions with every small and marginal farmer and farm hand who had his own small site in which he had put up his hut. Each was given a blueprint to grow tobacco, sweet potatoes, vegetables,

pineapples, coconut, chiku and mango trees, arachnut, banana, papaya, jasmine, paddy and ragi. The necessary inputs like implements, fertilisers, seeds, saplings etc., were made available. Side by side they were also given financial assistance to go in for dairying, poultry, piggy, goat-rearing, bee-keeping, tailoring, oil crushing, basket making, lime making, oil crushing, mat making, jaggery making, pottery, carpentry, black-smithy, gold-smithy, etc.

Hosala Project wins Award

Alongside Syndicate Bank has been motivating the people to dig up wells, de-silt tanks and construct irrigation channels to maintain compost pits, and helping them to construct their own houses; persuading parents to send their children to school and advising them on family planning and the importance of health and hygiene. The Hosala experiment has attracted wide appreciation for its outstanding performance. This project won the prestigious Associated Chamber of Commerce Award in 1977.

The Hosala experiment has given a big boost to the morale and confidence of the small and marginal farmers. Farmers are willing to accept the new techniques in

stages within their resources. The casual farm hand no doubt has to go for off-farm employment for which several avenues have been shown by the Bank. Until date a sum of about Rs. 12 lakhs has been deployed as assistance in this experimental family facilitate generation of incremental family income. Westland has been developed into cultivable land. Milk production has gone up. Agricultural production has increased and the community has now been able to free itself from lethargy. It can be said with confidence that given the will and resources it is not difficult to turn even the small dry farm into an economically viable unit.

More Clinics

The success of the Hosala experiment has emboldened Syndicate Bank to organise in collaboration with the Syndicate Agricultural Foundation similar farm clinics in Thakurpattur and Udupi-Pattur in Dahanu District, Varkala in Cannanore District of Kerala State and Kaman in Thana District of Maharashtra State. Besides Syndicate Bank has adopted

SYNDICATE BANK
The Bank that goes to people

155 villages in various parts of India to multiply the Farm Clinic experiments.

The pioneering experiments made by Syndicate Bank were acclaimed and accepted by others long ago as proven isopropyl and serve as a Guidebook for others. After extensive farm studies, Syndicate Bank came to the conclusion that farming should be made more and more scientific and the use of credit provided by the Bank in scientific farming should be ensured. About 300 Graduates in agriculture are working as Farm Representatives in over 3000 villages to assist the farmers. The Syndicate Agricultural Foundation was formed to promote technical literacy among farmers which led to the launching of over 120 Farm Information Exchange Clubs in several villages.

Extension Programmes

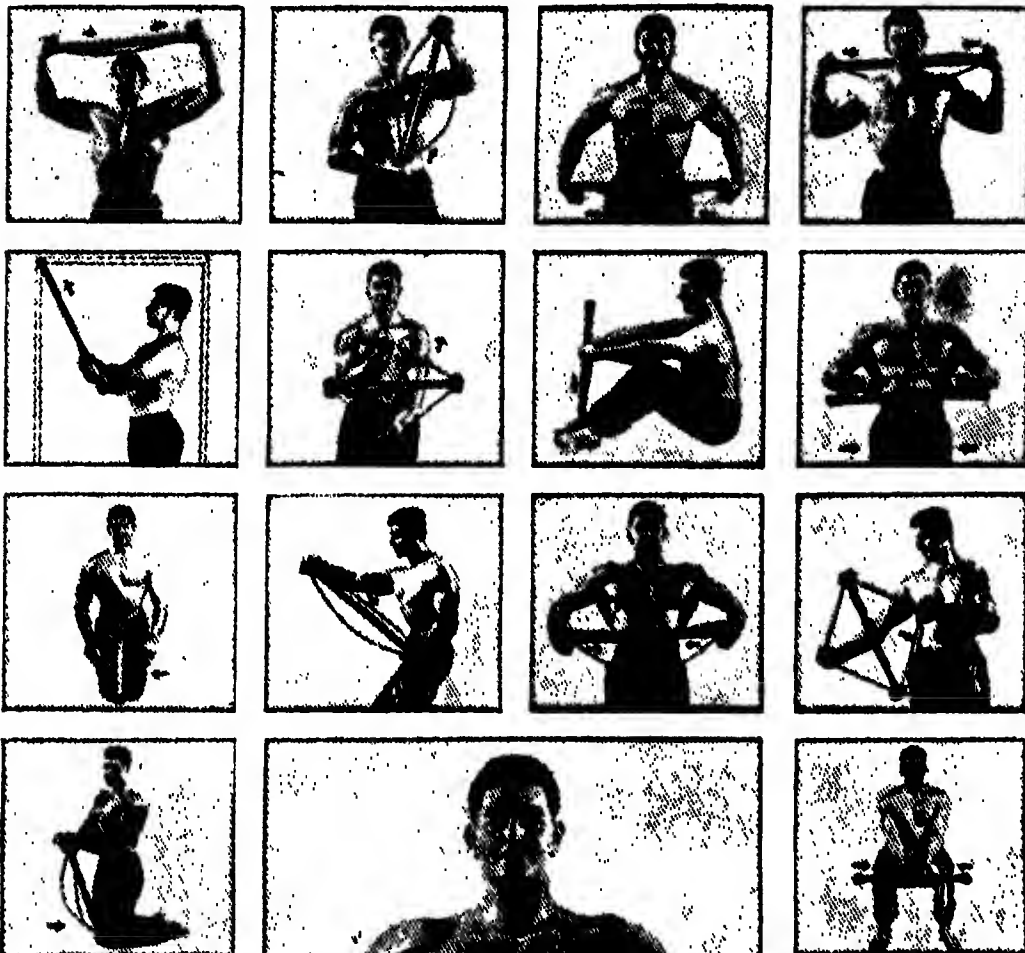
The Bank, independently and in collaboration with the Foundation, organises a number of extension education programmes bringing in the experts and scientists face to face with farmers; exhibitions, cattle show, animal husbandry camps, demonstrations, soil testing campaigns etc. Side by side, about 200 Future Farmers Clubs have also been organised in educational institutions in rural areas to show the youth the rich prospects of employment which scientific farming can offer.

The Farm Clinic Project is another step forward in Syndicate Bank's efforts to help the small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers and to achieve integrated rural development.



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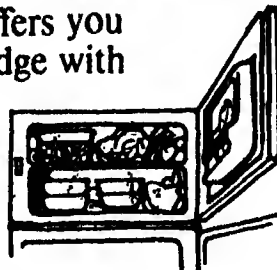
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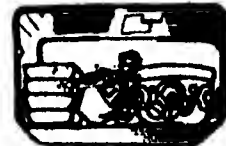
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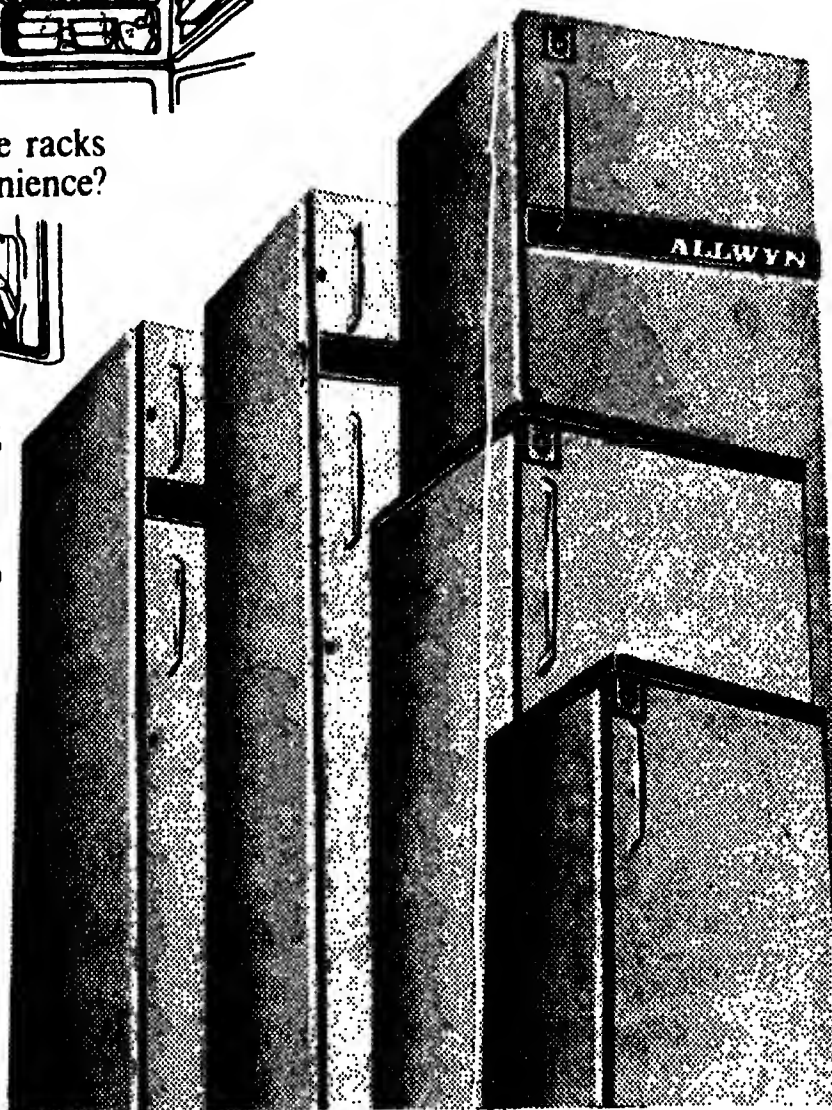
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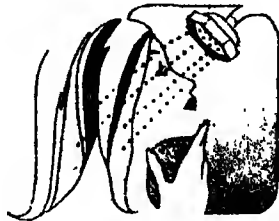
What makes Lipton Green Label special among 100% Darjeeling teas is, of course, its unmatched flavour. The result of Lipton's blending skills matured over 85 years of experience. This is what makes Lipton Green Label rather special.



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3 Those winter winds raise a lot of dust. And dirt and cracked skin are a dangerous combination. A good home remedy is a 'maida' and milk paste rubbed into the skin. Just see the dirt come out and your skin glow.

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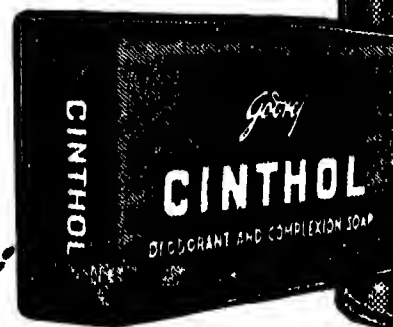
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Interpub/CTS 179

In many remote villages, Union Bank is helping people like Ram Prasad forget what a hungry stomach feels like.

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But he has forgotten all that now, and so have a lot of people in a lot of villages. They have food, jobs and clothing. They have sports, education and medical aid. And they eagerly look forward to the future.

Rs. 1.30 lakhs has already been disbursed in Khaziabar. Another Rs. 3.06 lakhs will be loaned out soon. Harijan women have been provided with sewing machines and ambar charkhas. Many persons have been provided with twine rope machines. Potters and masons have got loans for their business. Families have been given milch cattle. Co-operative and Service societies, parks and trees have sprouted. A literacy programme is underway. And all the people of Khaziabar smile with happiness.

Just one way Union Bank is doing its bit for our people and our country. For a brighter tomorrow.



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OBM/4134

Tapan Das



We have done it again — dropped another issue (December 23), courtesy the West Bengal State Electricity Board. As this will be the last issue of SUNDAY to reach our readers before the polls, what does the election scene finally portend then? Will anyone win? Perhaps Mrs Gandhi, but not if caste becomes the major factor. Otherwise, if the slogan of stability continues to reign supreme, Mrs Gandhi may very well become the next Prime Minister. In this ELECTION SPECIAL issue there is an opinion poll on UP and Bihar and the three superstar constituencies of Rae Bareilly, Sasaram and Baghpat. The place in history of the Jat raja is discussed. The tragedy that these elections represent for India is laid bare. Jai Guru Dev is interviewed on why he will not support Mrs Gandhi. And last-minute round ups from various States and key constituencies.

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ELECTION SPECIAL

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We regret being unable to carry Asterix

Cover transparency of Jagjivan Ram by Mandira Purle, of Charan Singh by Kamal Sahai and of Mrs Gandhi by M. D. Sharma.

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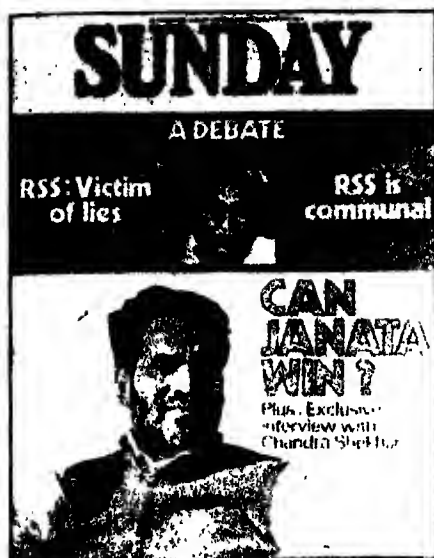
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Half true

KEWAL VARMA's cover story, "Can Janata win?" (November 25) is anything but an honest appraisal of the present political trends. The article has advocated the Congress-Lok Dal alliance. While the shortcomings of Janata during its rule have been highlighted and projected, Kewal Varma has scrupulously avoided any reference to the thousands of misdeeds committed by Mrs Gandhi and the ideological hypocrisy of Charan Singh, who is at most a class leader lacking a national stature.

Illuminating

YOUR debate on the character of the RSS (November 25) throws considerable light on the religious bigotry of this organisation. However, you have failed to expose the linguistic chauvinism that is prevalent among these zealots. As a four-year-old boy, way back in the early Fifties, I remember a Kannada couplet recited in the RSS shakhas. I translate it for your readers: There is no language as great as Hindi. There is no animal meaner than the swine. One who knows not Hindi. Be deemed worse than a contemptible swine.

That's the RSS for you!
B. S. Sridhar, Bombay.

I HEARTILY support D. R. Goel's views that the RSS is communal. There is something obnoxious and repelling about the RSS which causes almost everyone to hate it. If any RSS member is accused of being communal, his reply invariably is: 'Who is not communal? Everyone is!'
Rajesh Verma, Gangtok.

There is no reason to suppose that people have all of a sudden developed a love for all defectors and heroes of the Emergency and begun despising the Janata for its ties with the RSS. The protagonists of secularism cannot adduce an instance of secularism being mauled at the governmental level by the Janata. Occasional flare-ups of communal riots is a legacy of the past regimes and the unusual concern of the leaders for the minorities is nothing but a clever design to capture power to serve their own purposes. Enlisting the support of the Shahi Inam to fight the Hindu philosophy of the RSS is a mockery of the very spirit of secularism. The author perhaps, preferred to overlook all these realities.
Gautam Chakrabarti, Barrackpore.

KEWAL VARMA's article is a down-to-earth estimate of the Janata's election prospects. The Janata's controversial link with the RSS is seen as a factor which is likely to account for its electoral setback but the author fails to see that eventually the RSS will be their match winner. Next to bread, religion rules over all human affairs and the Janata over the years has managed to make a deep impression in the Hindu religious psyche. This is obviously not in vain because irrespective of our cry for communal harmony an animal-like gregariousness will continue to come upon Hindus to the tragedy of our motherland.
Sunil K. Singh, Patna.

THE Janata Party's achievements during its two-year rule are: endless

bickerings at the highest level; introduction of prohibition in the country; manufacturing of 77 in lieu of Coca Cola; auction of gold to swell the pockets of the rich; major communal disturbances in various places; protection of the cow when millions are starving; rocketing of prices of all essential commodities and various commissions of enquiry to divert the attention of the public from the misrule. It will be a miracle if the Janata Party candidates do not lose their deposits in most of the places.
A. J. Herbert, Thanjavur.

THE answer to your question "Can Janata win?" is a simple 'No' for the Janata can fool a few people a few times, some people some times but not all the people all the time.
Aslam Khatri, Bombay.

M. J. AKBAR's interview with Chandra Shekhar, "Janata first, Indira Congress second" (November 25) came at a time when the Janata Party is suffering from its fast-eroding credibility as a result of its opponents' desperate attempts to dub it as a force of communalism. Mr Chandra Shekhar gave a fitting rebuttal to his self-styled "progressive and leftist" friends when he raised a very pertinent point speaking about JP's movement which resulted in the birth of the Janata Party. He defended his presence in the Janata because of his incapacity to betray his erstwhile compatriots who played a vital role in the movement.
Pinaki Chakraborty, Calcutta.

THANK you very much for publishing "RSS is communal". We are shocked to learn that the birthplaces of Ramchandra and Sri Krishna are still used by the Muslims as mosques in free India.

It is sickening to see that the secularism of the Indian Government should favour Muslims only and does not have the courage to return the forcibly occupied places of worship to the Hindus. Is the Indian Government a hypocrite or an imbecile?
K. M. Gogoi and R. C. Saikia, Dibrugarh.

YOUR communal posture as a Muslim is quite clear from the debate on the RSS. No one ever denied that the RSS is communal; nevertheless it is also true that the Muslims and Christians are also communal and they are anti-national too. The article by D. S. Goel only substantiates the charge of Nanaji Deshmukh that Muslim communists and their vote-seekers have joined hands and started a campaign against the RSS because they do not want the Hindus to unite against the anti-national and subversive forces which are threaten-

ing to disintegrate our motherland. Why blame Golwalkar alone? I challenge you to name a single Indian Muslim leader who can be considered a secularist or a believer of democracy.

B. Mukherjee, Bombay.

NANAJI DESHMUKH in his article "RSS: Victim of lies" argues convincingly but he relies mostly on the ignorance of the readers. While defending the RSS against the charge that it is the "enemy of the minorities" he readily puts across the view (while forgetting the past) that the RSS has now opened its doors to non-Hindus. At the same time he reiterates that the "main purpose of the RSS is to organise and unite the Hindu society".
G. Natarajan, Madras.

GIVING due regard to the sacrifices and selfless service of the national leaders I have been provoked to write this letter as a harijan. Has Nanaji or his organisation provided two square meals a day to the lakhs of harijans? Has he got any document to show the upliftment of the slum-dwellers? Has he or his orga-



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THE NON-GREASY GROOMING AID THAT CHECKS HAIRLOSS.

nisation's leaders married the daughter or son of a harijan? Will it not be useful to contribute personally to the cause than to write at length? **T. A. Damodaran, President, National Depressed Class, Madras.**

YOUR readers have devoured enough on RSS, Hindus, Muslims, communalism, etc. If you continue publishing distorted and fabricated versions of what cantankerous politicians and communal-minded persons have to say, it will only help create disharmony. If we analyse Indian history in the right perspective and with an open mind, we will understand that Hindus are more tolerant and non-communal than their Muslim counterparts. Illustrating this point, Mr K. A. Abbas, the author-journalist-columnist says: "I often wonder what would have been the destiny of India — and of Indian Muslims — if the communally

inclined Muslims had heeded the warnings of the youthful idealist on the Aligarh University platform. Surely, then there would have been no partition, no Pakistan, no riots, no exchange of politicians — and no genocide in Bangladesh". **K. P. Narayan, New Delhi.**

THANKS to SUNDAY for providing us with the two pictures of the RSS. Nanaji has defended the RSS while D. R. Goel labours hard to defend a losing case. I wish there are at least some Indian Muslims who condemn the recent violent acts of Muslims in Calcutta and Hyderabad protesting against the occupation of the Holy Mosque in Mecca by fanatical Muslims themselves. **M. G. Sundaram, Madras.**

Editor's note: Please see SUNDAY, December 9 issue.

Wrongly posted

NIRMAL MITRA's article "Death of a Delhi housewife" (November 18) is not based on facts. My late father Mr K. K. Chopra who expired on 27.6.79 was a resident of C-41, Kirti Nagar whereas the article says he was a resident and tenant of C-42, Kirti Nagar. The landlord's name is Mr T. C. Kaura and not that of my father Mr K. K. Chopra. Moreover, I do not own any Fiat or any other car as was published by you. **P. K. Chopra, New Delhi.**

Nirmal Mitra replies: The Malhotras' landlord is Mr T. C. Kaura, of C-42, Kirti Nagar, New Delhi, who owns a Fiat. The late Mr K. K. Chopra was mistaken for the landlord because the house bears his nameplate. Our apologies for the lapse.

Remember Allahabad

AJOY Bose's "No regard for the law" (November 25) should be an eye opener to all who value democracy.

People have not forgotten the day in 1975 when the Youth Congress brought out a procession on the streets of Calcutta to denounce the verdict of Allahabad High Court declaring Mrs Gandhi guilty of electoral offences. The worst was in the afternoon when the Calcutta dailies were set on fire on the rostrum of a public meeting organised by the Congress and Mr Ajit Kumar Panja stamped the dailies with his feet. The dailies' offence was that they had published the verdict. The champion of democracy and justice, the then Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi, did not feel it fit to denounce such hooliganism and to stand by the honour of the Court.

This stout defender of the democratic and legal institutions showed scant regard for justice when she took away the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to try her appeal against the verdict of Allahabad High Court by amending the Constitution.

Tapan Kumar Banerjee, Raniganj.

If you have the guts

THE consul-general of Iran would have done better in not calling for an "understanding and true appreciation of the Islamic revolution in Iran" (Opinion, November 18). There is little to understand or appreciate in what they were doing in Iran by holding diplomatic personnel as hostages. If Iran's revolutionaries were so strong in their feelings against Americans, they should have forced their Government, or whatever is left of it, to break diplomatic relations, close the US embassy or even declare war against America. What they actually did was downright shameful.

S. K. Mazumdar, Calcutta.

Who's a foreigner?

SUBIR Roy's article "Assam — the rising volcano" (November 25) is a very correctly analysed picture of present-day Assam. He deserves congratulations for taking such a risk to expose the true picture. It seems the present movement in Assam and Meghalaya is not against the so-called "foreign nationals" but the movement itself is engineered by foreign reactionary forces now very active there. These instigate separatist forces to create chaos by taking the advantage of an almost non-existent Central Government.

Gopal Chowdhury, Goalpara.

SUBIR ROY has been only partially successful in giving a parochial tinge to the popular agitation in Assam, for he could not guess that the intelligent reader would read in between the lines to find out the facts from his piece. Anybody who has cared to know what is going on in Assam today understands that the movement is for the postponement of the election till the lakhs of names of foreign nationals in Assam are deleted. The author has been careful to omit the fact that lakhs of residents of Assam of all castes, religions and communities have joined the popular agitation and have proved that it is a national problem and the Centre should pay attention to it.

D. C. Goswami, New Delhi.

SUBIR ROY has given a splendid report of the present crisis in Assam. But he did not answer the question: who are the foreigners in Assam? Are those people who have come here from other States of India, foreigners? Non-Assamese who are working in Government jobs are thought to be foreigners. Why? From the very beginning of this agitation the Assam Government has supported it. No report of this agitation has been reported in the local papers. They only criticised the comments of Mr Jyoti Basu.

It is sad that no agreement could be reached at the conference of political Parties of Assam convened by Mr Y. B. Chavan. This issue of foreign nationals did not come in the way of holding elections in the State in the past. The Centre has promised steps to check infiltration and deportation of foreign nationals in future. This should satisfy those who are organising the agitation. **Arun Sarkar, Jorhat.**

SUBIR ROY has not discussed the real issue of the mass movement in Assam. It is a mass movement to oust non-Indians and is not against Indian citizens of various origins such as Bengali Hindus, Bengali Muslims, Oriya plantation labourers or Nepalis. It is a movement of the people of Assam. This is revealed by the cross-section of the people participating. People from all walks of life irrespective of caste, class, creed, religion, language, region etc. have participated spontaneously and the entire movement is peaceful. Nowhere in India or the world has such a peaceful movement taken place. Further, you cannot distinguish class on the basis of dress of the people which was done by Subir Roy.

R. N. Datta, Dibrugarh.

SUBIR ROY has omitted an important part of the incidents at Naharkatia where two Assamese boys died as a result of an altercation at a tea-stall. It was all over the non-payment of 80 paise! They poured hot oil on them. Timir Baran Mazumder was taking his tea there at that time. Hundreds of people gathered at that spot within minutes. The Bengali bank officer tried to tackle the situation and people got angry with him and did not excuse him. He died thereafter. So, may I ask why Subir Roy has reported only the second part of the Naharkatia incident in his article? **Himadri Das, Gauhati.**

ELECTION SPECIAL

This has become an election year.
If caste becomes the factor, the
could be stopped from being the
If the slogan of stable rule prevails,
Mrs Gandhi will win.

WILL ANYONE WIN?

By M. J. AKBAR



M.D. Sharma



beginning of the campaign. Mrs Indira Gandhi's mistake could have been that she peaked too early, and could not sustain that popularity against the face of her opposition's onslaught. But anyone predicting the outcome even at this stage is, more likely than not, indulging in wish-fulfilment. Votes will fall into every basket, and any result is possible.

IN the two days when the adult population of this country enters the polling booths and puts its stamp of approval on one of the many significant and insignificant candidates to elect the seventh Parliament and the next Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi and her Party will have three disadvantages: the caste factor, absence of passionate commitment on the part of the voters, and lurking memories of the Emergency. But Mrs Indira Gandhi will have one unique and absolutely crucial advan-



Dharm Ve Jaiswal

tage: the conviction in people's minds that only she can rule this country. Everywhere, one sentence is on everyone's lips, even on the lips of those opposed to her: *Is desh ko chalna sirf Indira Gandhi hi jaanti hai, Yeh khichri nahin chala sakta* (Only Indira Gandhi knows how to run this country. These coalitions cannot work). The real contest seems to be between the Indira Gandhi's charisma and the caste feeling that will make the voter follow a caste name on the ballot paper for better or for worse.

If the Congress(I) is defeated, it will be because of a combination of four factors. First, there must be an upsurge in caste feeling in the north which will force the voting to go totally on the caste basis. And in a caste war, it will be difficult for Mrs Gandhi's candidates to win, as she can count only on the support of the brahmins, and sections (albeit large sections) of the Muslim and the Hari-



N. K. Sareen

jan vote. The upper castes will tend to mobilise around the Janata Party, which already has the thakurs and the banias as its nucleus vote. And the backwards will poll for the Lok Dal. But this being a Parliamentary election, Mrs Gandhi's personality and slogan of good government as opposed to the instability and infighting offered by the others, could easily prevent the caste factor from being so predominant as to defeat her.

There is a subdued but definite current in her favour all over the north. And it is quite evident that Mrs Gandhi realises that the caste factor must be challenged if she is to win. Her main slogan in the north is: *Na jaat par na paat par, Indiraji ke baat par, Muhar lagegi haath par* (Not on caste, but on Indiraji's word, the vote will go the hand symbol).

Mrs Gandhi's second major enemy will be low polling. If the voter remains apathetic to the idea of queuing up on election day then the

D. P. Sinha

Party which will probably suffer most is Mrs Gandhi's, because it will be her myriad supporters who don't come to vote. The committed votes of the Janata Party and the Lok Dal, who are silent now in the face of the Indira sentiment, are likely to turn up—particularly the supporters of the Janata Party, who are not only economically strong, but also have been able to organise the machinery which converts support into votes on polling day. The Lok Dal is absolutely impoverished in this respect. Mrs Gandhi has been telling her election audiences repeatedly to reach the polling booths.

Her third enemy will be the Emergency and the reappearance of Sanjay Gandhi on the political scene. All over, by and large, the people seemed willing to forget about the Emergency, dismiss it as an aberration. Moreover, they add, Mrs Gandhi has apologised for the excesses, and that is enough for them. But deep down the fear still exists, and at the last minute it could still prevent the voter from putting that vital stamp on the hand symbol. The anti-Emergency vote, if it is there, will go to the Janata.

And the last disadvantage which Mrs Gandhi faces is the selection of very poor candidates in many constituencies. In Bihar, for instance, people freely admit that Mrs Gandhi has literally given away around ten seats by selection of bad candidates. It is true that in a Parliamentary election, the personality of the candidate is not very important; people vote on whatever issues appeal to them. And, as far as Mrs Gandhi's Party is concerned, the people will be voting for her rather than for her candidates, however good or bad the latter might be. After all, the Janata's candidates in the north in 1977 were not all symbols of virtue, were they? But the ability of the candidate does make a difference in the absence of a wave. In March 1977 the people did not need any persuasion to vote. This time, they will have to be goaded to go to the polling booths. And here the mobilisation of workers becomes a crucial factor often constituting the difference between victory and defeat. A "strong" candidate is one whom the local Party cadre respects: a "weak" candidate is one who cannot get his cadre to work for him or her.

MRS INDIRA GANDHI was riding the peak of her popularity in the first week of December. The famine, the inadequate relief work, the mismanagement of diesel supplies etc had totally alienated the people from both the Janata Party and the Lok Dal. Both these Parties were paying the price of being in power, and running the country inefficiently. As the opinion poll which we commissioned shows, Mrs Gandhi got a 52 per cent support in UP, and an even higher 56 per cent support in Bihar in early December. And even a casual glance at these two states is enough to confirm this finding. If the caste equations did not

exist, and it was a straight fight of the American kind, Mrs Gandhi would have romped home.

But then the rains came, saving the rabi crop, and the peasants said that it had begun raining diesel and gold, and a slow reassessment started. An early front runner always develops problems in the middle of the race, and then it becomes interesting to watch whose momentum holds out till the end. After the last date for withdrawals, as the candidates got to be known, caste considerations began to enter the collective consciousness. The eventual paradox might be that many people might not vote for Mrs Indira Gandhi despite their conviction that she is best-suited to rule the nation: the call of their caste might prove stronger than their fascination for Mrs Gandhi. If the Janata and Lok Dal can achieve this, they will have done what seems at the moment of writing to be almost impossible.

Almost. Caste is going to be a factor. The caste war is basically a war for jobs, and that is why it has reached such virulent proportions. There is a boy today in the Ranchi mental hospital, who became mad after a candidate of his caste was given a ticket by one of the major Parties. This boy became convinced that the candidate from his caste would win, become a Minister, and give him a job. And the simple truth is that caste is a factor in the handing out of loaves and fishes. In a collapsing economy, the war for jobs is going to take strange and violent shapes—and perhaps turn in quite unexpected results.

But Mrs Gandhi has one "caste" on her side which is never taken into consideration by the election mathematicians: the "caste" of women. It is an undoubted fact that the women of this country, irrespective of their caste or economic status, are by and large for her today. In Rae Bareilly, the women very often outnumbered the men at her meetings. And the excitement in their eyes as Mrs Gandhi passed, or when they glimpsed her, was evidence of the special place that Mrs Gandhi has in their hearts.

In fact, Mrs Gandhi is gradually building the electoral coalition which brought her to power in 1971: women, Muslims, harijans, brahmins plus that "charisma" vote, which should better be called the "trust" vote. But among the first three segments, her appeal, because of the history of the last few years, cannot be as uncritical, as positive, as it was in 1971. First women, as a group, do not poll very heavily. Second, a percentage of Muslims, despite the clear national swing of the community towards Mrs Gandhi, will still shy away from voting for a Party which declared the Emergency. And Babuji is undoubtedly going to make some impact on the harijan vote because of caste appeal: the slogan that a harijan should be the next Prime Minister

will carry its own weight. The Janata propagandists are making full use of this factor, despite Babuji's repeated public statements that he is not leader of only the harijans. It is impossible to assess to what extent these factors will influence the poll, and what percentage of the harijan vote will stay with Mrs Gandhi, and what percentage will move away. We really never have had an election quite like this one.

One thing, however, is clear. Three large communities, at least all over the north, have consolidated around the three major Parties. The brahmins have gathered around Mrs Gandhi, the thakurs have chosen the Janata (because of Chandra Shekhar), and the ahirs have opted for Chaudhury Charan Singh. These form the nuclei and the Parties are spending their time and money trying to garner the additional support necessary to win. Mrs. Gandhi seems to have got the Muslims behind her. The Lok Dal is trying to mobilise all the other backwards into its fold, while the Janata is looking towards the upper castes and the harijans.

But does such arithmetic work? If it works, then it will work in Rae Bareilly too, and on paper the Lok Dal candidate, Mahipal Shastri, is best suited to win because of the very high percentage of backwards in that constituency. However, computers have not yet started determining the fate of elections, and personality is still an important chemical in the relationship between people and politicians. On this score, Mrs Gandhi has no match.

Whatever the outcome of the polls, if Mrs Gandhi loses this election despite such a favourable atmosphere for her, the man who will be responsible for holding her back is Chaudhury Charan Singh. It is his social movement on behalf of the backwards which radically altered the nature of this election, making it not only a referendum on the Janata's performance (which, if it had been the sole issue, would have ensured the Janata's total debacle), but also a referendum on the economic policies of the future. The backwards have never been so united as this—and, indeed, neither have the forwards been so together. It is difficult to say what impact these social realignments will have on the polls. Maybe the backwards have still not acquired the confidence to take their social movement to electoral victory; maybe their inner contradictions will defeat them again. But one thing is certain: the backwards have become a force to reckon with, and no Party can afford to ignore them in the future.

In this election of so many ifs and buts, it is impossible to say how the votes will swing by the first week of January. If caste dominates the election scene, then the Janata might be able to match Mrs Gandhi in terms of seats, with the Lok Dal getting a reasonable number of victories in UP, Bihar and Haryana. And then of course, the future is—well, did someone say safe?

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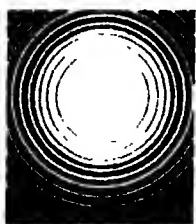


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"Mr Charan Singh is the one who has done most to encourage the caste feeling"



MRS INDIRA GANDHI had taken a break for lunch in the middle of a hectic round of canvassing for herself in Rae Bareilly and her son, Sanjay Gandhi, in Amethi. The response from

the people had been tremendous. Not merely were the crowds large and enthusiastic at her scheduled meetings (the women in particular came in large numbers, very often outnumbering the men), but she was continuously stopped by small bands of people on the way who would not let her proceed without hearing a few words from her. Mrs Gandhi would then pick up a megaphone, stand on a stool or whatever had been put there, and proceed to confirm a vote which had already swung towards her. More than a dozen cars travelled constantly behind the white (but now brown with dust) Peugeot in which she was travelling. She sat in the front beside the driver, in good view of the people who lined the way on her exhaustive journeys through the dusty districts. Behind her, along with her personal entourage, travelled a bevy of journalists: independent TV journalists making films, crews from the major American TV networks, foreigners from the print media, and of course representatives of the national Press. At the lunch break on December 18, she granted an interview to us. There were five of us: David Housego from the Financial Times, who had come down to cover the campaign, Rajendra Bajpai of the Delhi bureau of Reuters, Santosh Bhartiya who writes for Raviwar, Ajay Bose from our Delhi bureau, and myself. This was how the taped conversation went.

Rajendra Bajpai: What do you think are the prospects of your Party at this stage of the election campaign?

Mrs Gandhi: I never talk about the prospects of an election; during no elections have I talked about the prospects.

M. J. Akbar: How good do you think the Rajmata of Gwalior is as a candidate in Rae Bareilly?

Mrs Gandhi: What do you mean by 'good'?

MJA: I mean, do you think she is going to get votes, is she going to put up a good contest, or will it be a walkover for you?

Mrs Gandhi: I am not talking about prospects, and I am not talking about the prospects in Rae Bareilly either. But she is hardly the person to put against me.

MJA: How do you react to the fact that basically a feudal leader has been chosen to contest against you?

Mrs Gandhi: Isn't this typical of the Janata Party's policies? Just that one act vindicated everything I have been saying about them.

David Housego: How much do the caste and communal questions influence the election as compared with before?

Mrs Gandhi: It is going to make a dent in the voting.

DH: To what extent?

Mrs Gandhi: Well, certain castes will want to vote for their own people. Mr Charan Singh is the one who has done most to encourage this caste feeling, and continues to do so.

MJA: Is the caste factor more important now than before?

Mrs Gandhi: Very much so. I don't know about (it being) important, but it has been blown up. In Bihar it is almost like a civil war.

MJA: And how do you think this will affect your Party's prospects?

Mrs Gandhi: It is very difficult to say, it is a changing situation. Where one caste is strong... obviously no caste is strong enough to withstand a combined combination of the others.

MJA: When your Party selects candidates, madam, is caste taken into consideration?

Mrs Gandhi: To some extent, only to this extent that we feel that in each district there should be fair representation; it shouldn't be just one (caste), because that irritates the voter.

MJA: Madam, you have been campaigning now for two months. How would you describe the people's response?

Mrs Gandhi: It is not for me to describe it; it is for anybody to see.

DH: Well, you toured this constituency this morning. How is the response as compared to 1977?

Mrs Gandhi: Now, you see, their experience of the last two years has been such that obviously there will be greater response now. Mr Charan Singh is supposed to be a farmer's representative, but the poor farmer has never had such a bad time since independence.

Rajendra Bajpai: Do you think the Emergency will emerge as an issue in this election?

Mrs Gandhi: It has never been an issue with the ordinary people. It is an issue with you people (the Press).

DH: When you pass from place to place, what makes you choose what you say at a particular meeting?

Mrs Gandhi: Nothing in particular. I just say whatever I feel like at that moment.

DH: Last night, for instance, when you spoke at the Muslim minorities meeting, the impression that you gave was one of increasing communal tension, not lowering it.

Mrs Gandhi: That was not increasing communal tension.

Mrs Gandhi coming to attend a meeting at Rae Bareilly



NAGNU MA

DH: How would you describe the mulla's speech?

Mrs Gandhi: It is the natural reaction of anybody, who is a patriotic Indian, who has suffered during the independence struggle and is now being told by the RSS that he is not an Indian at all and he should go away! What kind of response do you expect from him?

DH: I think the mulla mentioned that the Janata Government had slit throats of people at Aligarh University.

Mrs Gandhi: No, not that. He didn't say anything like that.

MJA: But don't you think that encouraging people like the Shahi Imam in politics; don't you think that this continues to help an unsavoury element in our politics? I mean, whether he is campaigning for the Janata one day, or you another day: that is not the point.

Mrs Gandhi: (Remains silent. The silence is broken by another question.)

MJA: Babuji and Charan Singh in their campaigns have been both making the point that you are going to bring back the Emergency. How do you respond to that?

Mrs Gandhi: Doesn't it show that they have absolutely nothing to offer? They have nothing to say about what they have done so far, and they have nothing to say about what they can do in the future; isn't that very obvious?

DH: Could you say something about what you will do in the future?

Mrs Gandhi: I have. Our programmes are there for everybody to see. Firstly, we have to continue what we have begun towards making a dent in the poverty. All the development programmes, not merely in Rae Bareilly but in most places in UP have been stopped for two and a half years.

DH: If there wasn't a majority with any one Party —

Mrs Gandhi: Why not? Why do you start with that premise? I would like to remind you that the Indian Press said exactly the same thing in 1971. That time also no one was ready to believe when I said (that we would have a majority) although I knew that (newspaper) correspondents were sending different information (saying that Mrs Gandhi would win) because they had given me the figures that they were sending (to their editors). But they (the Press) kept on projecting at the national level quite a different thing. I see no point in answering such a hypothetical question.

Santosh Bhartiya: Mrs Vijay-lakshmi Pandit has been saying that you and Sanjay Gandhi should lose in order that democracy might survive. Is this an extension of their wishes, or is this a family —

Mrs Gandhi: What do I know about that? Ask them. (Pauses.) What is democracy, do they know? Can you see democracy in the Janata Party? Was it democracy when all the State Governments in the north were dismissed? Which paper wrote about this? If you people



Sanjay Gandhi with Sanjay Singh

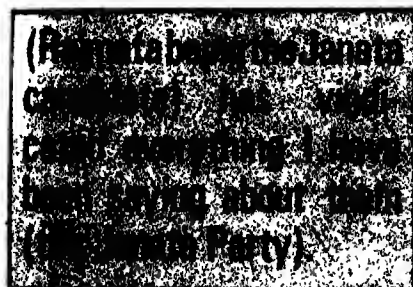
spoke less about democracy it would be better. There has never been less democratic functioning in India than we have seen (under the Janata), even during the Emergency. Except that we detained some people, and there were some curbs on the Press, which we said publicly we are going to do; we didn't do anything behind people's backs. Apart from that, nothing undemocratic was done. Today, everything they do is undemocratic. I mean, I would like to know what action of theirs is democratic. Can you point out one? Their relation with the judiciary, the way people are transferred; any aspect of public life that you see, what is democratic in it?

DH: Mrs Gandhi, if you got a majority, would you offer Sanjay a post in the Government?

Mrs Gandhi: Certainly not.

DH: Would he have a post in the Government?

Mrs Gandhi: Why should I offer him a post? He is going to Parliament merely to defend himself. He has been the butt of the Press' attack. Nothing in the world, not in the world's history, I think, would you find so much maliciousness and so much falsehood as the Indian Press has been spinning out against Sanjay. And there has not even been a shred of truth in any of the things they have written. (Turns to Santosh Bhartiya.) Are you from Rawar? This gentleman's magazine printed a full interview with



Sanjay without having met him at all. And put words in his mouth which are absolutely contrary to all our thinking. And he comes and sits and talks to me about democracy! You think people have respect for such people as in that magazine? And if this is the thing about democracy will democracy last in our country?

SB: What happened in that interview, I do not know, but —

Mrs Gandhi: Please do not talk to me; please keep quiet. Enough is enough.

DH: What do you think Sanjay would like to do if he is returned to Parliament?

Mrs Gandhi: Sanjay doesn't want to be in politics. He wasn't involved, until he was goaded and presented as the very devil. Now is he going to just sit and take the beating, or is he going to show the people that he isn't (what he is made out to be).

DH: But he is standing for elections now.

Mrs Gandhi: Certainly. How else can he defend himself?

DH: Supposing he won, how would you see his political future?

Mrs Gandhi: It is for him to shape his future, not for me: I don't shape other people's futures.

DH: But you wouldn't offer him a post in the Government?

Mrs Gandhi: (very firmly) I would not.

DH: Would you offer him any post?

Mrs Gandhi: I don't know what you mean by post. He came in to defend me at the time of my judgment, when the absolutely ridiculous judgment was given (she was referring to the Allahabad High Court judgment unseating Mrs Gandhi). That also was regarded as fairplay and democratic. None of the Indian papers wrote anything about it, although all the responsible Western comments were quite sharp at that time that this would never happen in any democratic set-up.

DH: You have supporting you this time a number of the members of the business community, of the industrial houses.

Mrs Gandhi: Who, for instance?

DH: I would prefer not to name names.

Mrs Gandhi: But I know the number who are supporting us.

DH: In London, there is Swaraj Paul, for instance.

Mrs Gandhi: Oh, Swaraj Paul has been supporting us throughout; he is about the only one. But he can only support us because he is not living in India. Under the Janata Party's "democratic" Government do you think anybody can support us and get away with it? You don't know what is happening in India then.

DH: You nationalised the coal industry. And it is working very badly at the moment.

Mrs Gandhi: Is it? Certainly not worse than it was before, and certainly the workers are not dying. The industry may not be in such a good way, but the workers are kept.



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ing a good wage. And nobody else can stand from that constituency, let me tell you.

MJA: Are you referring to Dhanbad?

Mrs Gandhi: No, I am referring to Chindwara and that area (in Madhya Pradesh).

DH: You would not think of offering part of the coal industry back to the private sector?

Mrs Gandhi: The point, you see, (is that) they don't want to help the workers, and their whole attitude, not only in the coal industry but also in mining and other things, is, what they can get out of the mines immediately for personal immediate profit. It doesn't matter if it (the industry) is ruined for the future. This is how they have been going. Nobody wants to take over a thing simply for the sake of taking it over: I am certainly not for nationalisation for the sake of nationalisation, but if

Q: Mrs Gandhi, if you got a majority, would you offer Sanjay a post in the Government?
A: Certainly not.

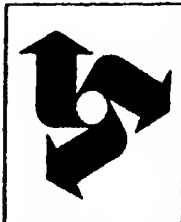
it is in the national interest it has to be done.

DH: What would you say your bank nationalisation or your coal nationalisation has achieved?

Mrs Gandhi: Bank nationalisation has brought about a revolution in this country. For the first time it has opened the doors of opportunity to the poor and the middle class which has been closed for centuries: but we had no middle class earlier....

Analysis

The tragedy of Charan Singh



THE story of Mr. Charan Singh is one of those that one hesitates to start telling, because it changes as you tell it. No one has had such sudden ups and downs. But despite whatever may happen to him in the next 10 or 15 days, in the last 10 or 15 years he has been, almost in spite of himself, a man of extraordinary significance. Or, to put it differently, his place in history is more secure than his place in the current and impending electoral politics. He did not make history: it is history that made him. But his place in history will remain prominent.

Two swords hang over his immediate future, and who would have thought until a few months ago that his future would be as precarious as it has now become? One is the sword of the politics of defection, and although he used to be the master of that kind of sword play he now looks like becoming its most conspicuous victim. The second is the sword of caste politics; and that one, though he made it himself, can be more dangerous for him. At any rate, it is the second sword that is worth examining more, because it is more closely related to his place in history. Such of his electoral prowess as might survive the collapse of the grand alliance he was hoping to build will have to run the gauntlet of caste politics. Or I should say the gauntlet of caste-and-class politics, because his problems are concentrated pre-

cisely in that area where caste and class mingle and confuse each other.

More than any other man in the history of Indian politics, Mr. Charan Singh is identified with the emergence of the power of rural India. Sure enough, many others before him, like Gandhi and Nehru, or on a smaller scale Lohia (who was the first to demonstrate, in Bihar, the power of the so-called "backward castes") grew in stature as support for them grew in rural India. But this was a kind of unquestioning support, which was neither aware of its power nor differentiated itself in any self-conscious way from urban-industrial India. Nor did these leaders use this power to challenge the power of urban-industrial India.

In fact the reverse happened in the days of Gandhi's and Nehru's glory, especially the latter's, though I am not implying that this was his purpose. In the name and on the strength of a semi-intellectual and urban middle class liberalism, they destroyed the power of zamindari and big landlordism. This destroyed the only potential for political power which existed in those days in rural India and the only possible threat in those days to their own urban middle class power base. Even if the threat had materialised, it would have been a feeble one, because the landlords were too few, too alienated even from rural India—many of them were more at home in Calcutta than in their own zamindaris—to mobilise any effective political clout.

There could have been a more credible and more immediate rural

threat to urban power if the movement against the zamindari system had been a genuinely rural movement, homegrown in the village. Then the victors in this war would have become the spearhead of a rural challenge to urban power. But as it was, rural India was only a passive recipient of laws made by urban folk for abolishing the zamindari system.

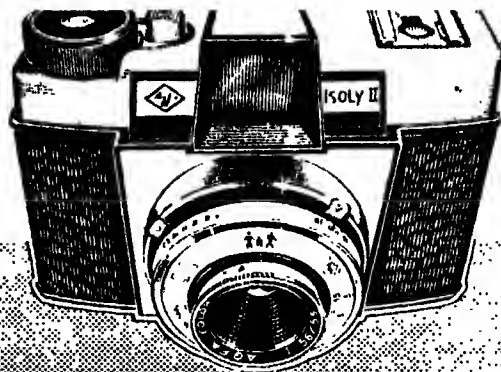
There were several separate beginnings of rural power, symbolised by the rise of Chavan in Maharashtra, of Nadar in Tamil Nadu, Lohia in Bihar and not least among them though later, Charan Singh in UP. But they suffered from several limitations. They were scattered and isolated in the first place. Second, their rise was less directed against urban-industrial power than against what were at that time the dominant upper castes within rural India. And thirdly, insofar as they represented movements of the lower classes against the upper classes, their support base had so little organisational or economic strength that they could not generate any worthwhile challenge to anyone.

Several things had to happen before this situation could change. The class-caste war against the zamindari system had to be won. The tenants who thereby acquired ownership had also to acquire the ambition and pride of an owner. Agriculture as an occupation had to become sufficiently remunerative to fuel the ambition. The new input-intensive agriculture had to become sufficiently resource-consuming for the farmer to realise that his future prosperity depended upon his ability to compete successfully with the urban-industrial consumer for his due share of national resources.

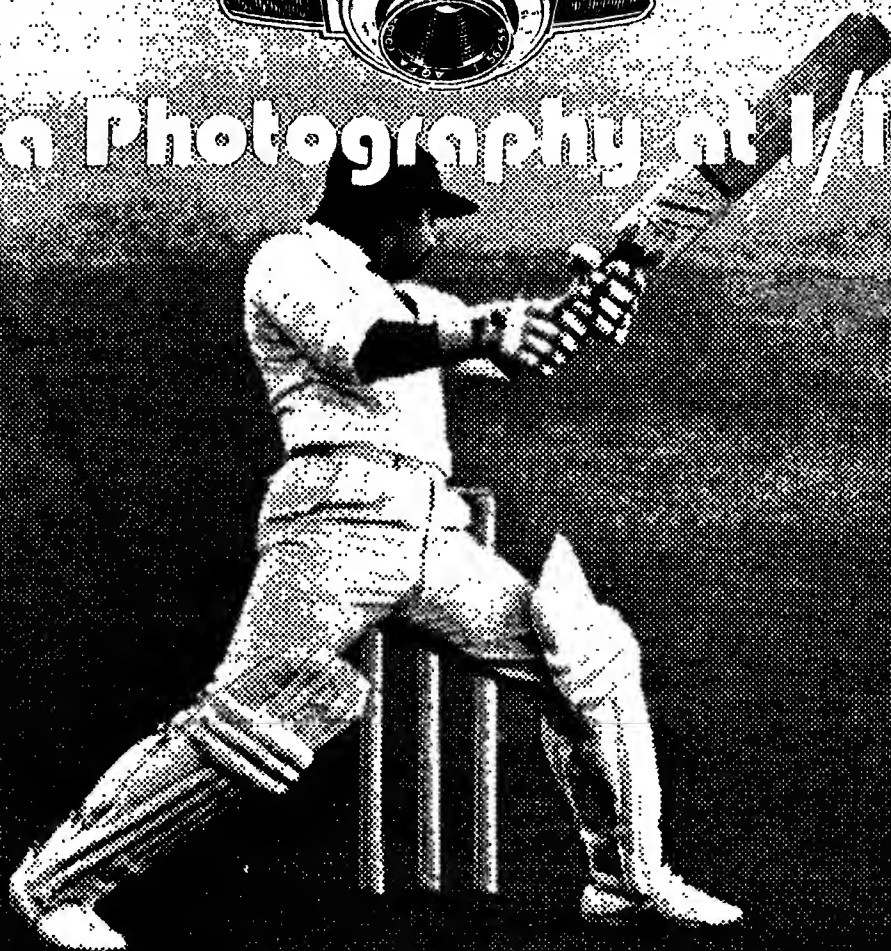
This realisation in turn had to fuel the realisation that you do not get your share of national resources unless you first acquire your due share in the national power system, which in a parliamentary democracy needs a political Party through which you can mobilise the power of your numbers. Only then can a political leader emerge who can meet this need. A leader might emerge earlier if he is great enough to be able to give history a push; or alternatively if history gives a lesser leader a push and puts him in the saddle, even though he may not be a durable rider. Charan Singh stands somewhere between "the greater" category and "the lesser". That is why though history put him into the saddle his tenure in it is so insecure and may be shortlived.

It is interesting to see how many of these conditions were fulfilled or began to be fulfilled in about the middle 1960s. The completion of zamindari abolition and the transfer of land to its new owners; the emergence of lower castes into State level politics in many areas; the start of the resource-consuming and wealth-producing green revolution; and the beginnings of the rapid rise of a man like Charan Singh—all





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these events bunched together into just about half a decade. This injected a new axis into Indian politics—the axis along which agricultural-rural India now confronts the urban-industrial with some success. This is also the axis along which Charan Singh had hoped to wage his war. But he is being overtaken by two enemies.

The arrival of Charan Singh into the large scale politics of UP coincided with a period of very intense instability. This, however, was not Charan Singh's fault. Wherever there is stagnation and growth is arrested—and in the mid-1960s the Congress was as stagnant and arrested as it could be—the emergence of a new force must cause instability, and such instability is much to be preferred to continued stagnation. Of course, Charan Singh came to be looked upon as the cause of the instability, an impression strengthened by his later career, and he became very unpopular for that reason. But his misfortune was not that. It was something else.

Before Charan Singh could make himself the leader of the caste-class constituency represented by the middle class farmer with a middle-sized holding a new constituency raised its head against him which is represented by the lower castes and the landless, specially the harijans, who are the lowest as well as the poorest; and it raised its head very rapidly. It was able to do so not only because politics moves faster with every year that passes but also because Charan Singh's constituency hastened the birth of an anti-Charan Singh constituency by its own excesses.

The reasonably well-off proprietor-peasant and owner-cultivator, who is the backbone of Chaudhury Charan Singh's political power, is hard work-



Charan Singh

ing and productive; in fact he is the most productive segment of Indian society today. But he is also aggressive, unyielding, very demanding and a very hard task master who neither spares himself nor his workers. Therefore, the relations between him and his landless labour are more inflamed than were his own relations or the labourers' relations with the indulgent, easy-going, lazy and largely absentee landlords of the old style feudal agriculture.

The temper of the times, plus the temper of the new relationships on land after the abolition of the old type landlords have been the catalysts for the rapid emergence of the latest rural constituency, that of the resentful and politically volatile lower castes and landless labours. An additional and more recent catalyst has been the sight of a harijan leader, Jagjivan Ram, being denied his chance to become Prime Minister by a collusion between a jat leader of the north, Chaudhury Charan Singh, and his opposite number from the south, President Sanjiva Reddy. So, while on the one hand the rapid

and historic emergence of Charan Singh's constituency has given great force and push to the challenge of rural-agricultural India to the urban-industrial, it has also on the other hand made the electoral arithmetic very difficult for Charan Singh.

What would help Mr. Charan Singh is a rural electorate in which political awakening has gone far enough for it to look upon itself as a resurgent rural power but has not gone so far as to rouse the rural proletariat against the middle caste and middle-sized peasant proprietors, who now constitute the dominant power in rural India. But an electorate of just the right mixture of political awakening and somnolence is difficult to find and difficult to hold for very long. This makes Mr. Charan Singh, and the Lok Dal generally, very vulnerable.

If Mr. Charan Singh had been as great as a person as he is in his role as a historical phenomenon, he might have taken one of two options. The safer and more creditable option would have been to consolidate the position up to which history had brought him, but to continue to use that position from within the Janata Party—as indeed he was doing until July, 1978—to consolidate the gains rural India had made under his leadership, and later on to push the gains further forward from within the power structure of which he was such an important part.

The more risky but still creditable option would have been to try to recast his rural role and to make his constituency, under his own leadership, more receptive towards the problems of the newly emerging constituency of the lower caste landless. He might have had to face the risk of losing the former constituency without gaining the latter. But at worst that would have been an honourable failure and at best a history-making success. But Mr. Charan Singh turned out to be smaller than his opportunity—just as in another sense he is greater as a symptom than as a person. And so as a somewhat innocent but honest product of the "backward classes", he became a pawn in the political game of that wily Brahmin Madhu Limaye, whose aims are yet unfathomed and his ends unseen. Mr. Charan Singh shattered one power structure of which he was the kingpin and failed to put another in its place.

Perhaps Mr. Charan Singh failed only because he did not realise how irresistible is the destructive genius of the dubious successors of Ram Manohar Lohia. But it is more likely that he failed because while he was important enough to be used by history as its vehicle, he was not great enough to make history. Rural India must therefore wait for another conjunction between man and opportunity for moving up further in India's political and economic power structure.

The three mistakes of Charan Singh

CHAUDHURY CHARAN SINGH has always been a master at using power to expand and consolidate his political base. Each time he became Chief Minister of UP, he managed to increase his vote with his policies. But this time, he made three crucial mistakes which have hampered his poll prospects.

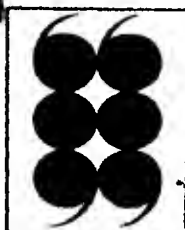
His first mistake was his inability to pass the reservation policy for the backwards in the Union jobs. If he had managed to do this, he would have continued the work done by his Chief Ministers in Bihar and UP, and thoroughly consolidated the backwards who now form the main sustenance of the Lok Dal. The second mistake was his inability to restore the minority character of the Aligarh Muslim University through an ordi-

nance. He himself was hesitant to do this, despite pressure from all his advisers to do so. This would have ensured a chunk of the Muslim vote for the Lok Dal, and the various Parties would not have had to put this promise in their manifestos. His third mistake was his inability to get Government financing for the candidates of the recognised Parties. The idea was that the Government would put one lakh in each responsible candidate's kitty, and then vigilantly restrict spending on the campaign trail. Lok Dal candidates today are thoroughly impoverished, and their resources are laughable compared to those of the Congress(I) and the Janata Party.

M. J. A.

PRAN CHOPRA

India on its knees



HERE is an image of India. The fair-ground lights of the election hustings in a Delhi suburb, the luminous strip-lighting on the platform, the dusty dark of evening, the familiar lies echoing from loudspeaker to loudspeaker. This is India brought to its knees. C. M. Stephen might be any one of a cast of thousands, most of them interchangeable with each other, playing their parts in this national theatre. Here he is standing before you and warning the crowd, barely listening and many paid to attend, against the threat to democracy, secularism and socialist progress. The terms are all interchangeable and at random if this or that alternative to himself is elected. A caricature of cynicism and privilege, he pours scorn on any and every alternative to whichever Party or faction or grouping he happens to belong to (for the time being). This farrago is being enacted all over India, a torrent of nonsense as devastating in its own way as the floods at Morvi or the Andhra cyclone. Everyone else is evidently betraying someone or something, only the (crooked) speaker before you is in his own eyes honest.

There are only minor differences between most of these meetings. In rural UP the bored crowds, minds blanked out by toil and indifference, stand on beaten and dusty ground. In Delhi they sit on chairs set down in the suburban roadway and, to add spice to the dish, there is a strutting western television director with his

camera crew and their glaring TV lights. His pose is colonial. His lips curled in contempt which can be detected only if his face is studied closely. He sees only zoo animals before him (the media has its prostitutes also). When the camera turns on the crowds Stephen breaks off his speech and tells them to raise their hands and cheer in unison. Paid, they do. If madmen become masters of this country, he shouts in a crazy voice, everything will go to pieces. This is India brought to its knees, not its senses.

On the road in eastern UP the petrol attendant says the candidates use the people, the people use the candidates, everybody is using each other.

There is a long dusty road ahead stretching into flat infinity. The feuds wracked by drought, the drivers of Party cars fill up with 20 litres and get a chit for 30. Garagehand and driver spit the difference. It is all in a long day's work. Many take their bribes from one Party and vote for another. Keeping their notions to themselves, they laugh up their sleeves at the baseness and stupidity of that scheduled caste of politicians who are not half as wise and knowing as they are. Hired small town hoodlums are paid Rs 10 a day to yell interchangeable battle cries and insults at the passing motorcades of the privileged. Like tornadoes they sweep with their jeeps, rifles and garlands through villages laid waste by poverty.

Mrs Vijaya Raje Scindia, the Rajmata of Gwalior, winds down the window of her Impala as she reaches a small knot of skeletal men and women by the dusty roadside. She asks for their votes. They do not

know who she is, this regal person. She might easily be Mrs Gandhi. We want food, they say, we are hungry. The flag-bedecked column moves on like every other such column leaving the poor weary dustcovered and sheeted like the already dead to their endless waiting and endless labour. If you bother to look out of the rear window you will see their figures still standing by the roadside passing into oblivion. For the student of political contradiction this electoral lunacy is almost an art form. In Rae Bareilly, for example the cracked voice of dynasty and dictatorship which had millions sterilised and tens of thousands arrested, gets out of its Peugeot to offer socialism and freedom from fear to the bored, the paid, the once terrorised and the faithful. Her aristocratic victim, the Rajmata of Gwalior, appeals to the poorest and the most downtrodden in the voice of an older paternalism to vote for a harijan leader. Beneath the walls of the palace of Shivgarh the feudal peasantry turns out in its thousands before their rani. Their lives are disregarded, except for their votes and their labour. Grizzled men with greystubbed chins, thin black legs and bare feet and holding homeric staffs gaze in age-old awe at the commanding and dignified figure with the hoarse voice, dark sunglasses and white sari, aristocratically calling for democracy, the rule of law and a new moral order. (They all do).

There is a forest of bamboo staves. Small children carrying children even smaller and staring eyes, too many made opaque and sightless by past hunger, a small ragged boy, the eternally curious child, my child and your child and the world's child, who tries to climb the pandal is flung fiercely aside by an insensate policeman doing his duty. Even if the skies cannot find it in themselves to weep on this drought they might at this tiny moment in a forlorn life at least shed one tear for this child and another for India. There ap-



Krishna Murari Kishan

pears to be no limit to the goodhumoured idle or bemused toleration of the criminal denouncing criminality or the communalist denouncing communal division. Above all, no limit to those who are blatantly serving their own interests while appealing hand-on-heart to the interests of the nation. And then there is that chilling silence which greets the questioner — extended arms beating the air, voice rising in a crescendo through the loudspeakers — who asks, do you want locks on your mouths again and your hands in handcuffs and your sons to be taken for sterilisation?

But listen to the carnival voice of the people, that great voice of India often speaking behind its hand, and you will hear something different and often unprintable, satirical, obscene, violent. It tells another story, unknown and unheard by the pundits weighing seats in the balance and calculating what will be the consequences of the mutual deceit, bribery, hope and fear which is known as an Indian election. It lies beyond and behind that familiar resignation which the trained bloodhound, domestic and foreign, searching for local colour always sniffs out in India and calls original reporting. Of course, it is thus that the mythical man-in-the-street is again asking, what else is there except Mrs Gandhi, or saying that there is no one able to rule us and, as before, there are voices, most often middle class women's voices who coyly ask of the Emergency's brutalities, what Indian woman would do such things, no women would do it or, most naively of all, say, yes some of these things were done but they will not be repeated.

BUT though the facts seem to have receded in memory, that in those days prisoners could be beaten with chains and when they asked for water were given urine, facts which have been shrunk by the passage of time and distance, it is not only resignation and acceptance that you hear if you listen. Some of these are the voices of common people whose lack of knowledge or respect for the truth means that they have never voted, are not going to vote now and are not likely to vote in the future. Many of them have gone past caring who wins, god or devil. In these U. P. villages teeming with life and the half living, the man in a threadbare shirt and thin borken shoes who says that Bahuguna was living in his own house, then he left it and went to a rented house, but he was not so comfortable there, so he went back to his own house again, has translated into the people's own truth opportunism and defection, evasion and lying, beyond further translation. So has the toothless old village woman who is asked by a candidate for her vote and instead shouts fiercely like an avenging fury, hair bedraggled, give us cooking oil, whereas her voice is as old and broken as the dry earth it-

self and both will outlive this election. As for the shouted and violent obscenities against the whole accused tribe of ruling politicians who for three decades have passed along these dusty roads promising both earth and heaven to the empty handed, they were too gross for translation. They expressed a fierce and ancient misery, contempt and anger which will one day have to be answered. They will certainly not be answered in this election or any other.

In today's India Mrs Gandhi's enemies fight each other while she attacks them for the sins which she has herself committed, either with them or against them. Many of the people, says a man scarved and shivering in the winter cold, are afraid and do not know who to choose—the sophisticated woman in a delicate and rich sari, a world away—but only an hour later tells me that the average Indian, whoever he is, is petrified by evil. You can see a man dying in the street and no one goes to help him. Others are afraid and joining her out of fear and not because they believe in what she says. Certainly the lettering of the Emergency slogan 'Work more talk less' is as fresh on the wall now as the day it was painted to avoid going to jail. The quiet voice says such people feel they must get on her band-wagon.

We have been here before and recognise them all—the journalists, the academics, the businessmen, the moneyed who seem to have been born without shame and bear the signs of it on their sweating foreheads and in their eagerness to please power, any power, whatever power, however used and by whomsoever. But with the same frequency I am told by others who have against all odds preserved a higher opinion of their fellow Indians and have the more dignity for it themselves, that you cannot ride roughshod over the people, that you cannot sell sweet dreams to the people forever, that the people—if they choose—can reduce any king or tyrant to dust. Who is right and who wrong India will soon find out for itself and will have to cope with the verdict one way or the other.

Amethi, the promised land of far-away future, is cold and deserted by 9 p.m. Sanjay Gandhi's portrait smiles fixedly from the poorest stalls and hovels into the teeth of the cold. Only a couple of dozen Party workers in spotless white stand together in the centre of the dead and barely lit town. The people are indoors keeping out of harm's way. A few candles or small paraffin lamps flickering wanly in the darkness. The prospect of a baleful violence seems to be waiting about in the freezing dark, looking for its outlet or a victim. Huddled on the small station platform are small greywrapped bundles. Their occasional movements and muffled voices signify that there is a cold life, with its teeth chattering, even in this profound darkness.

DAVID SELBOURNE

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UCO/CAS-47/79

WHO WILL WIN UP & BIHAR ?

Results of opinion poll conducted by PATHFINDERS INDIA, Bombay



A NOTE OF CAUTION

The findings presented in this report reflect the situation as between December 3 and 5, 1979. While they indicate *trends*, they should *not* be seen as *accurate predictions* since the political situation is changing every day.

1. INTRODUCTION :

An opinion poll was carried out in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar for SUNDAY magazine.

The opinion poll, conducted in the context of the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections, was aimed at finding out the opinions of electors in these two states.

2. OPINIONS POLLED ON :

The opinions of the people were polled to estimate the following aspects :

- Which Party is likely to win in these States and why?
- The slogan which the electorate believes is most relevant, chosen from the following slogans :

Gaon Jagao, Desh Bachao

Indira Lao, Desh Bachao

Defector Harao, Democracy Bachao

- The willingness to vote for Sanjay Gandhi ; and
- Whether they feel Sanjay Gandhi will be an asset or liability to Indira Gandhi.

3. RESPONDENTS :

The opinions were gathered among various groups of the electorate in each state.

The segments considered were :

- Rural and urban electors ;
- Men and women electors ; and
- Muslims, harijans and electors belonging to other communities

Adults who said they will not vote in the forthcoming elections were not interviewed.

4. METHODOLOGY & SAMPLING PLAN :

The opinions were polled using a semi-structured

Photographs : Indira Gandhi by Focus; Jagjivan Ram by CNS and Charan Singh by S. Atibal.

questionnaire which was personally administered by investigators.

The opinion poll was conducted between 3rd and 5th December, in 15 villages and 2 urban centres in each state.

5. ESTIMATION PROCEDURE :

Men and women, rural and urban electors and electors belonging to various communities were interviewed.

The opinions of each of these groups have been weighted by the proportions of these groups among the total population of each state to arrive at aggregate level estimates for the state.

To take an example :

State : Uttar Pradesh

Men	Pop. (000's)	Representation
Rural Population	40214	85.5%
Urban Population	6802	14.5%
Total	47016	100%

(Source : 1971 Census)

These weights (representations) would be used to combine the responses of the rural and urban men.

Opinions :

Will vote for :	Rural Men	Urban Men	Total
Charan Singh	7.32	5.75	7.09
Indira Gandhi	49.75	48.26	49.24
Jagjivan Ram	17.42	16.67	17.31

The figure 7.09 would be computed as :

$$7.32 \times 0.855 + 5.75 \times 0.145 = 7.09$$

This method has been used in aggregating data.

I—THE SCENE IN 1977

As a basis for comparison, presented below are some data on the last General Elections.

The scene in the 1977 General Election

1) Electors	U.P.	Bihar
Men	28,080,937	18,389,419
Women	23,853,360	16,606,983
Total	51,934,297	34,996,402

2) Voters	U.P.	% Voted	Bihar	% Voted
Men	17,616,533	62.73	12,833,891	69.79
Women	11,694,469	49.03	8,430,387	50.76
Total	29,311,002	56.44	21,264,278	60.76

3) Votes polled By Parties : (% of votes)

	U.P.	Bihar
INC	24.99	22.90
Janata	68.08	64.98
CPI	1.10	5.63
CPM	0.10	0.20
Other Parties	0.28	1.69
Independents	5.45	4.60

Source : Report on The Sixth General Election To The House Of The People In India 1977 Volume II Election Commission of India.

II—THE SCENE IN 1979

Our investigators have reported certain features about the prevailing conditions which deserve attention.

There seems to be a general apathy towards the idea of elections and an air of disillusionment with politicians.

The aspirations seems to be for the essentials of life rather than great benefits.

There is general despair at the absence of law and order and rising prices

Once again, the "mukhiyas" (village heads) and other local leaders are likely to play a very important role in deciding the outcome.

In view of the first point mentioned, voting is likely to be lower than in 1977

III—THE OPINION POLL

Overall, the opinions of the people in U.P. and Bihar on the questions asked are shown in the following table :

	Uttar Pradesh			Bihar		
Will vote for :	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Charan Singh	8.3	8.7	5.6	11.6	12.2	6.2
Indira Gandhi	52.8	53.2	50.7	56.7	56.8	55.3
Jagjivan Ram	11.8	12.1	10.1	19.7	20.0	17.4
Can't Say	27.1	26.0	33.6	12.0	11.0	21.1

Most relevant slogan

Gaon Jagao, desh bachao	27.0	28.7	16.8	20.7	20.5	22.6
Indira lao desh bachao	45.4	46.2	40.2	49.4	51.3	32.2
Defector harao, democracy bachao	13.3	12.7	17.0	22.9	22.0	30.6
Can't Say	14.3	12.4	26.0	7.0	6.2	14.6

Will you vote for Sanjay Gandhi ?

Yes	24.3	24.5	23.0	20.9	21.6	14.9
No	58.4	60.0	48.8	62.7	62.5	64.2
Can't Say	17.3	15.5	28.2	16.4	15.9	20.9

Will his presence help or harm Mrs. Gandhi

Help	21.9	22.1	20.7	25.5	26.9	12.5
Harm	45.2	46.3	38.6	51.3	51.0	53.5
Can't Say	32.9	31.6	40.7	23.2	22.1	34.0

The readings from these figures are :

— Mrs. Gandhi seems to be the favourite and the poll indicates her party would poll 50-60% of the votes in these states.

About 10-20% of the electors would vote for Babu Jagjivan Ram and between 8-12% for Chaudhury Charan Singh.

10-30% of the electors are undecided.

— "Indira lao desh bachao" was the slogan seen as most relevant in both states.

"Gaon jagao, desh bachao" is comparatively more relevant in Rural U.P. and "Defector harao, democracy bachao" in urban Bihar.

— A majority (around 60%) would not vote for Sanjay Gandhi in both states.

— About 45-50% in both states feel that his presence will harm Mrs. Gandhi's party

— The result of this positive feeling for Indira Gandhi and the negative feeling towards Sanjay Gandhi is difficult to predict.

The detailed tables by sex and community are at the end of the report.

Some interesting extracts :

1)	U.P.		Bihar (%)	
Will vote for :	Men	Women	Men	Women
Charan Singh	7.09	5.18	9.82	8.11
Indira Gandhi	49.24	56.82	56.20	68.81
Jagjivan Ram	17.31	10.30	18.81	12.25
Can't Say	26.36	27.70	15.17	10.83

Indira Gandhi clearly is more popular among women

2)	U.P.			Bihar (%)		
Will vote for :	Mus.	Har.	Others	Mus.	Har.	Others
Charan Singh	4.38	2.69	11.10	4.03	8.09	14.41
Indira Gandhi	55.35	51.40	52.71	74.38	62.45	50.85
Jagjivan Ram	7.94	24.22	8.65	6.43	15.92	23.90
Can't Say	32.33	21.69	27.54	15.16	13.54	10.84

Indira has support among all groups in U.P. and the Muslims and Harijans in Bihar.

Jagjivan Ram's support is best among Harijans in U.P. and 'others' in Bihar.

Mus. = Muslims ; Har. = Harijans

3) Indira Gandhi's image is predominantly of one in whom rule the nation and the people prospered.

Charan Singh's image is primarily of the one who cares for farmers and Jagjivan Ram is seen as an experienced leader who will be good for India and as one who cares for the backward classes.

Another interesting feature which shows up is in terms of the opinions among people of various education level.



Education : Some Illiterate Schooling SSC Graduate

UTTAR PRADESH

Will vote for :

Charan Singh	5.2	6.4	8.4	4.5
Indira Gandhi	51.8	50.0	46.3	44.9
Jagjivan Ram	14.7	13.1	12.6	16.8
Can't Say	28.3	30.5	32.7	33.7

BIHAR

Will vote for :

Charan Singh	6.3	8.8	9.8	7.8
Indira Gandhi	69.9	60.5	50.5	49.9
Jagjivan Ram	10.1	16.3	21.1	23.1
Can't Say	13.7	14.4	18.6	19.2

We see that Indira is more popular with the uneducated

In direct contrast, Jagjivan Ram's popularity increases with higher educated persons

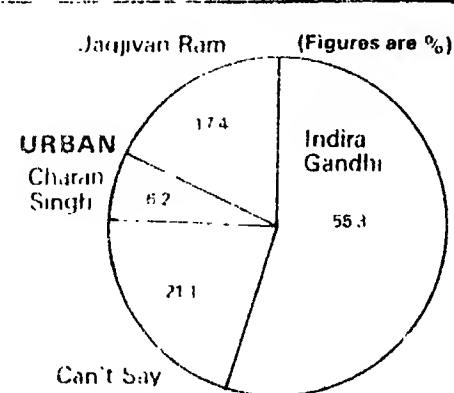
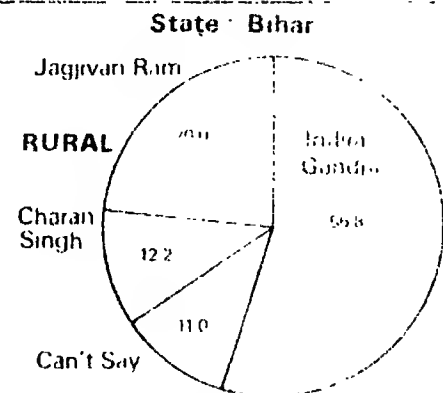
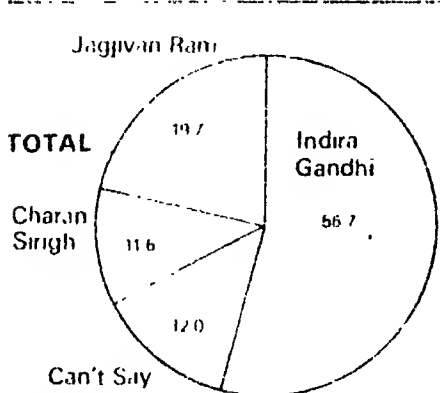
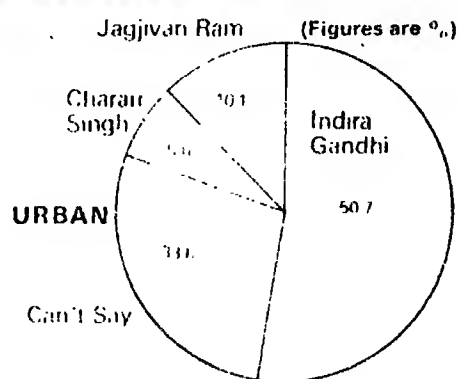
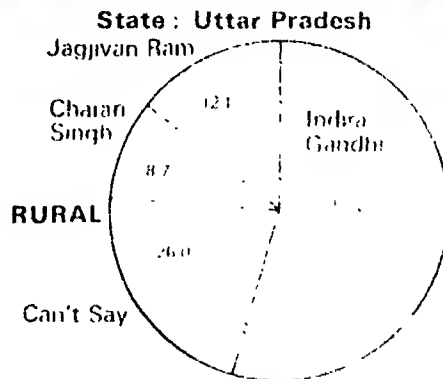
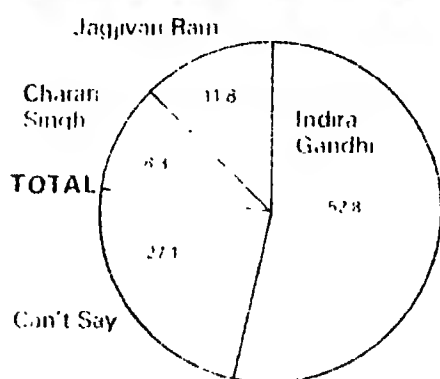
Another, somewhat disturbing, finding is that the "can't say" increases among the more educated. An indication, perhaps, of the dilemma at which the country is poised.

The category of 'other backward classes' (other than the Harijans, scheduled castes) has not been presented separately since their population is not available in the census data and projecting their opinion would thus not be possible.

However, the opinion among them is shown below :

	U.P	Bihar	(%)
Will vote for :			
Charan Singh	12.04	33.33	
Indira Gandhi	40.74	41.03	
Jagjivan Ram	5.56	25.64	
Can't Say	41.66	-	

OPINIONS AT A GLANCE



An opinion poll was carried out in various areas of three constituencies Baghpat and Rae Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh and Sasaram in Bihar

BAGHPAT

Percentage who would vote for :

Charan Singh (Lok Dal)	44.4
R. C. Vikal (Congress-I)	22.8
Dhara Singh (Janata)	2.7
Can't Say	30.1

RAE BAREILLY

Percentage who would vote for :

Indira Gandhi (Congress-I)	63.5
Vijaya Raje Scindia (Janata)	1.2
Mahipal Shastri (Lok Dal)	1.3
Can't Say	34.0

SASARAM

Percentage who would vote for :

Jagjivan Ram (Janata)	68.5
Mahabir Paswan (Congress-I)	29.2
Shivanandan Paswan (Lok Dal)	2.3

As a comparison, presented below are the percentage of votes polled by the various parties in those constituencies in 1977

	BAGHPAT	RAE BAREILLY	SASARAM
Janata	63.5	53.5	78.5
Congress	36.5	36.9	20.1
Others		9.6	1.4

Madhya Pradesh

An unimportant election



ON the middle of the road to Nowhere lies the small and dozing town of Panna, high up to the north in Madhya Pradesh, on the edge of the UP border, neighbouring the violent UP district of Banda, where guns are more valuable possessions than wives. If Banda is dacoit-infested, the adjoining Panna is not exactly free from crime; but the dacoits of Panna too — compared with their compatriots-in-arms in adjoining Banda, or the nearby Bhind, Morena, Chambal and Agra — are sleepier too. Nor is there much that they could loot.

The poor are as poor as you get them. This is forest and hill and sparse unirrigated one-crop land. The hills, some of them, provide Panna with its singular claim to fame — the diamond mines. And hordes of poor come to the mines to seek their precious stones of fortune, investing whatever little they may have into a fling with destiny. A varied array of castes and different kinds of tribals are strewn over the region — gonds, lodhis — but caste wars have not assumed the proportions they have just a few miles further north, in Uttar Pradesh, or in Bihar. Madhya Pradesh is different. Here the rajahs still rule. The quality of their power, and the strength of their command, has weakened with the gradual crawl of the twentieth century into Panna, but no one denies their continuing influence: an incoming collector is still expected to pay his respects to the Rajah Sahab, and woe betide the politician who spurns the local prince.

It is a brutal existence for the people. The best of times means nothing more than two full meals a day; normalcy is defined by one harsh meal, and bad times means hunger. A sari, a dhoti, a cooking pot: that is the sum total of property.

Much of the poor live by hewing wood from the forests and selling it at dirt cheap prices in the town, from where it is carted by efficient businessmen to the larger cities and sold at ten times the price. The major threats to the extensive forests in the district come from both the rich and the poor. The rich, still convinced that it is the birthright of the thakur to hunt, still certain that one

of the ways of flaunting virility is by shooting a lumbering nilgai with the help of a powerful, efficient, long-range rifle, still defining hospitality by a communal bloodletting, poach regularly in the jungles. It is, of course, against the law (except in very very few selected regions), but the maintenance of the law is not the easiest thing in the world in these parts. There are quite a few funny stories about how the forest officers try and prevent poaching. There was one thakur who was a notorious poacher. And word reached the forest officers that he had guests and was going to take them out for a shoot. So the jeeps of the forest preservation officers, for the next couple of days, did not wander about in the jungle; instead they kept circling the house of the thakur—in order to prevent him from setting out at all.

The other threat is deforestation. The landless simply keep on cutting the trees on the edge of the forest, until they have cleared about five acres or so, and then they till this land. Sooner or later the Government gives in and regularises this takeover of State land. One of the surest ways of knowing that bad days are ahead is when the price of wood starts coming down in the markets. This means that more people are being driven to cut the wood in order to keep starvation at bay. This year, the price of wood had started coming down from August.

Today the massive failure of the kharif crop, and the long drought has driven the people to their knees in supplication and prayer. And the prayers are not only to the gods, but also to men: the men with power, the men in Government, the men with money to lend. Sometimes, gods and human beings, and their mutual relationships, are confused. On December 7, Mrs Indira Gandhi came here for an election meeting. It was a big day for the town; such an important leader had never come here before; nearly 10,000 people turned up to see and hear her. That meeting injected a sliver of life into a totally lifeless election. But that was not all. Coincidentally, the area had its first rains in months a little before. And the people responded by saying that even Indra had melted in front of Indira Gandhi's pleas. Two hundred kilometres down south, in Jabalpur, the socialist Sharad Yadav was the beneficiary of similar luck. On November 19, he began a six-day padaya-

tra through about 150 villages in his constituency, Jabalpur: as soon as he finished, the skies darkened and the rain came pouring down.

These rains produced long sighs of relief. Immediately farmers began ploughing their fields, and there was a hectic scramble for the stocks of fertiliser. Today the welcome smell of churned brown earth has returned to the air, and the rabi crop has had an auspicious beginning. But the enormous damage that the total disappearance of the kharif has wrought cannot be remedied by a few rains. The rains bring promise, not fulfilment. The Government has opened relief works, and the Ministers have totally predictably begun to "in-pec" relief centres" in order to make the State pay for their election tours, but the threat of starvation to both men and cattle is still great. January and February will be cruel months; and if there are no fresh rains then even the little water that is left will dry up. Even if human beings are saved from starvation, cattle will certainly die. There is no food for the cattle. The forests which should have been green in the lovely winter sunshine, are a dull brown, as if stricken by a disease. The grass is dead.

IN such times of hardship, the villager, of course, looks up to the Government for relief, but he also has two other sources of solace. The one is the former rajah. These scions of feudalism do not do much these days; not many of them have money, and the few that have are reluctant to squander it away on charity, but the myth of the rajah looking after his praja lives on. And it is fuelled by the occasional story, which spreads like wildfire among a receptive audience. There is the story of Martand Singh, the ex-ruler of Rewa. He was contesting in 1977 as an Independent supported by the Congress (as he is contesting now), and the man who opposed him was the blind socialist leader Yamuna Prasad Shastri. After Shastri filed his nomination, he went up to the prince, and told him that, er, he was, er, the Janata candidate, and he hoped, er, that the prince would, er, understand. The prince, in classic feudal spirit, not merely wished him well in the ensuing battle, but also gave him Rs 20,000 of his own money to make it a fairer fight. Shastri fought such a fair fight that he did something quite unheard of: he defeated the prince. Well, that was that. A little while after the March 1977 elections, the main marketplace of the city in which the candidates live was destroyed in a fire. Immediately the prince went and donated Rs 50,000 to help rebuild the market. There were tears in the people's eyes when they realised they had defeated "such a noble man". Plus, the rajahs and zamindars still own large tracts of land, having evaded the ceiling, and large numbers are directly dependent on them.

The other, and much more vital, much more relevant source of solace



is the moneylender. Even in normal times, with such poverty ruling and the demands of Indian society being what they are, the moneylender is the fulcrum around which the rural economy and even social life balances. The villager has no surplus, and he has to go to the money-lender despite his rapacious rates of interest, for a loan. This new feudalism finds its impact on the elections. The moneylender exercises enormous power in the village, and his influence sways a great number of votes. One of the important reasons why the Congress was wiped out of Madhya Pradesh was, paradoxically, the Emergency decision to write off all loans. All old loans were written off, of course, but the villager's sole source of credit was also destroyed. And in the absence of any alternative source of credit the villager was forced to go back to the moneylender. Who, in turn, instead of giving the villager money, gave him taunts. The villager finally resented this theoretically laudable decision of Mrs Gandhi's Government as much as anything else.

The Janata Party in Madhya Pradesh is, despite the ornamental presence of a few ex-socialists of the PSP variety, largely an extension of the Jana Sangh, and there in fact lies its strength—if the socialists took over the Janata Party in Madhya Pradesh they would successfully destroy it here. The Hindu revivalism preached by the Jana Sangh, its defence of the right to privy purses, its championship of free enterprise, has traditionally appealed to the feudal elements. And the traders and the moneylenders form the hardcore of the RSS and the Jana Sangh here. These two together form a solid electoral phalanx in Madhya Pradesh, and anyone trying to defeat such a combination has a formidable task on his hands.

The town of Panna, and its adjoining villages, fall under the Damoh parliamentary constituency. This is not a glamour seat. No journalists of the national and international Press are paying any attention to the outcome at Damoh. The winner from Damoh, to whichever Party he or she may belong, is not likely to become a Minister if his or her Party comes to power. But the winner will have one vital asset, which will put him or her on par in the next Parliament with Mrs Indira Gandhi, Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram (assuming that these three manifesto Prime Ministers win in their constituencies): they will all have one vote each.

Panna district has no one who calls himself an atheist, two people who belong to "other religions", 45 Buddhists, 133 Christians, 2,786 Jains, 12,962 Muslims and 4,13,064 Hindus. The rajahs of six prominent and not so prominent princely States have their influence, not to mention the 40 or so zamindars, who are equally feudal in their attitudes. The 'Hindu' nomenclature disguises under its fold a vast array of different and

often mutually antagonistic categories. There are the tribals who form about 13 per cent of the population. They are the lowest of the low: the gonds and the raigonds, the latter being the gonds who worked directly for the rajahs. Then there are the harijans; about 17 per cent of the population, just a shade above the tribals—at least most of them are permanently housed, even if equally hungry. The tribals are often mobile, going wherever the need for water and a meagre livelihood will take them. There are the backward classes: the lodhis, the kols (who carry coal), the ahirs, the sahus (telis), the sains (barbers, also called, the better known, nais), the dhimars (water carriers), the bansors (weavers of bamboo strips, making baskets etc), the baris (who are traditional servants, who once worked for the kings and now work for the collector). And then the cream: the baniyas, the brahmins, and on top the thakurs. All these biradaris (brotherhoods) have their own values and collective aspirations, their different leaders. The social poverty of the tribals is evident from the fact that they do not have a single leader who can represent them. The



harijans at least have a man who is an MLA.

The three major candidates searching for approval from this vast arsenal of demands and aspirations are Prabhu Narain Tandon from the Congress (I), Vijay Malaiya of the Janata, and Miss Kusum Mahadele of the Lok Dal. The first is obviously a brahmin; he was a Minister in the Congress Government in MP. Malaiya is a bania and a Jana Sanghi. And Miss Mahadele is a backward, a ladbi, a lawyer from Panna town. The three, indeed, seem quite representative of the Parties they belong to.

It was only after December 13, that the first signs of campaigning began to be visible in Panna; the first jeeps came out, and the microphones began making their hideously unmusical noises. But the audience was clearly apathetic. This election may have many other firsts to its credit, but one thing it will surely go down in history as is the most listless election to be held so far. Private Janata Party estimates of the polling turnout vary between 35 and 40 per cent: many would consider even that too optimistic. And since rigging in all its many-bued glory has still not reached the land of Madhya

Pradesh, there is not much chance of an artificial boost to the polling percentage.

The Congress (I) had a headstart. The initial sympathy clearly lies with Mrs Indira Gandhi as the people repeat the familiar complaints: prices have risen (even the price of salt has more than doubled to 35 paise a kg in the last year); law and order is in a mess; all the Janata people are incompetent; they have brought this country to such a mess; relief has been shoddy; the present lot are corrupt; and 'all said and done, Indira Gandhi was better'. Plus, she has apologised, hasn't she?

But if Mr Tandon thought he was going to walk away with the elections, he is sadly mistaken. To begin with, his personal reputation is not what he would like it to be. People remember his tenure as Minister with some repugnance; and his intellectual qualities raise a universal laugh. But most important is the Janata campaign. As the Janata jeeps began touring the villages, and its cadre was activated, they began reminding the people of the Emergency. And that has already begun to strike a responsive chord. The Janata always had a base in the area, and the growing consensus at least in Panna seems to be to give it another chance.

The unknown quantity in this election is Miss Mahadele. She has an excellent reputation for service to the poor, as a lawyer, and she is the president of the Lodhi Sangh and the local Backward Classes Association in Panna. What precise impact she will have on the result is difficult to assess; nobody has any idea, not even the Lok Dal. It can be taken that she will not win, but how many votes she will get and from which basket is the Big Question. If she takes away 50 or 60 thousand votes from the Janata, the Congress (I) could win; if she takes away potential Congress (I) votes, well, Mr Malaiya could be drawing an MP's salary from next January.

But if there was a candidate who was (I know it sounds absurd but let us continue the image) campaigning for no elections, most probably he would win. The people are sick of politicians and Parties, and their apathy and non-cooperation will be evident on January 3, when they go to the 346 polling booths in Panna district to cast their votes: most of them will simply not go. They couldn't care less. The next MP will not be a representative of the people, but a representative of certain vested interests. That will be the basic truth about this Nowhere election.

Drive two hours north from Panna, cross the Ganga, and drive two hours or so further north, through Fatehpur district. From Nowhere, you will suddenly reach Somewhere. Somewhere where all eyes will be focussed, and all hearts beating. This will be the district of Rae Bareilly.

M. J. AKBAR

Spot report

Uttar Pradesh

Rae Bareilly: Villages may vote Lok Dal



"Dekhiye babuji, for the last hundred years ever since the British made these brahmins and thakurs into rajas and ranis, they think that we will do anything that they tell us to do; they think that we are their servants. They think that our vote is already in their pocket. Well, let me tell you that they are assuming too much. The yadavs and kurmis today are nobody's servants. We will vote for ourselves this time," said Mangal Behari Yadav, an angry old peasant in Munshiganj village in Dalmau sector right in the interior of Rae Bareilly constituency.

This is the essential contradiction in Rae Bareilly today. Not the contradiction between the charismas of Mrs Indira Gandhi and Rajmata Scindia. Not the contradiction between the money and resources of the two queens. Not even the contradiction between the forces of the Emergency and democracy. The real contradiction in Rae Bareilly today is that between the old feudal dominance of the brahmin and thakur on one side and the growing consciousness of the backward castes.

But now Jai Gurudev has started campaigning for Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia of the Janata Party and it is expected that he will wean away a certain section of the backward votes. However, Mahipal Shastri of the Lok Dal will still get a sizeable number of the backward votes.

It is easy to get confused about the election scene in Rae Bareilly if one stays in and around Rae Bareilly town. The blaring loudspeakers, the raucous supporters of Mrs. Gandhi and the Rajmata and the omnipresent poster war would lead one to the conclusion that the election in the constituency is essentially between two queens' and the might and power they can muster. "Elections in Rae Bareilly are like this saab. Small candidates have no chance. Ever since Indiraji started contesting in 1967, Rae Bareilly has become a prestige seat. That is why the Janata has fielded a queen against Mrs Gandhi. Who else would have the money to match her?" said a panwala in the town.

But as one goes into the interior of the constituency and starts talking with the peasantry, one realizes how different the election scene is in the countryside. For one thing, almost

every second person, one is either a yadav, or a kurmi, or lodhi or some other backward caste. Enquiries reveal that the total backward caste composition is nearly half the total electorate. In almost every family of this backward caste section, there is at least one member who is either studying in school or college. It is this educated backward caste who controls the vote in the villages of Rae Bareilly today. "I am studying in college and I don't have a vote. But I command the ten votes which my family has," says a young man in Simri proudly. "And this vote is going to nobody else but Chaudhury Charan Singh. I don't care for his Party, I don't bother about any politician. I just know one simple little thing: He has got 35 seats out of 100 for us and that is enough. When



Ram Naresh Yadav

I vote for his Party, I am voting for myself and other backward castes. These thakurs and brahmins must be taught a lesson. They must be stopped from dominating all the jobs." It was difficult to stop the young man from the regular little speech he was going to deliver about the necessity of job reservation. "We are not bothered about candidates. We are not bothered about political Parties. We are not concerned about democracy or the Emergency. What we are bothered babuji, is about our stomachs. We are bothered whether our children will get education. Whether they will get jobs when they pass out of college," another person piped up.

It is this overriding preoccupation about socio-economic issues among the peasantry, most of which is made

up of backward castes, which has pushed the election prospects of Mahipal Shastri, a relatively minor politician compared to the two queens, to the fore. Shastri, a brahmin politician not particularly distinguished in national politics, has suddenly emerged as a dark horse who could upset the apple cart of both Mrs Gandhi and the Rajmata.

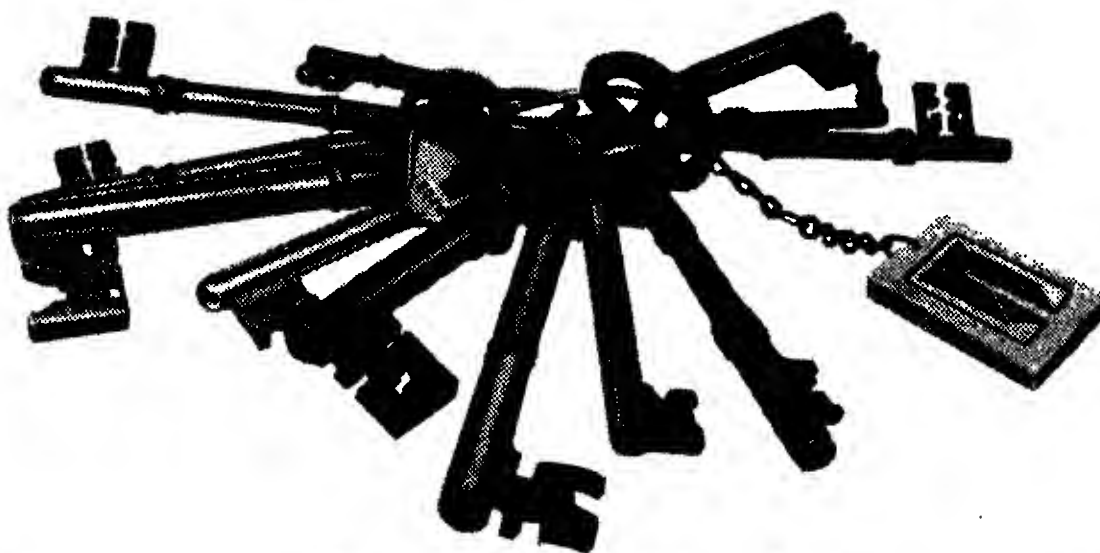
Having made a relatively late start in the elections, Shastri was himself surprised when he held his first meetings in the countryside on December 18, along with the former State Chief Minister and now Deputy Chief Minister, Ram Naresh Yadav. If the crowds were not particularly large, they were extremely responsive. Every word of Ram Naresh Yadav was heard with rapt attention. Yadav talked about basic economics and the need for the peasantry to mobilise themselves and get a larger share of jobs, resources and opportunities, and this clicked with his audience extremely well. "This is the first politician who has come and talked sense," said a peasant who said that he wasn't even aware of the fact that Mahipal Shastri was standing as the Lok Dal candidate, before this meeting. "I was thinking that I won't vote at all this time but now I know that Chaudhury has set up a candidate, I will vote for him," said another peasant who also predicted that if the Chaudhury himself comes to Rae Bareilly, there was no power under the sun which could prevent the victory of Mahipal Shastri.

Till the last few weeks of December, both the Indira Congress and the Janata Party had successfully created an impression that the Lok Dal was not fielding any candidate from Rae Bareilly. The Janata Party workers were also very cleverly creating confusion over the change of the election symbol of the Lok Dal. While the Janata Party has the kisan with a plough over his shoulders, the Lok Dal has the kisan ploughing the fields. Since the earlier symbol of the BKD, later adopted by the undivided Janata, was the kisan with a plough over his shoulder, it is easy to confuse the peasant by saying that this was the symbol of Chaudhury Charan Singh's Party.

In spite of the backward castes having tremendous potential as a vote bank, the Lok Dal itself is doing little to capitalise on this. Shastri has only five jeeps compared to the hundreds of vehicles of Mrs Gandhi and the Rajmata. He also has a handful of fulltime workers, most of whom are working for the Lok Dal out of their own money. "If we could have even a fifth of the money and vehicles that Mrs Gandhi or Rajmata has, we could create such a Lok Dal wave that both Mrs Gandhi and the Rajmata would be just swept away in front of it," said a Lok Dal worker.

Many of the workers are bitter because the Central leadership of the Lok Dal seems quite indifferent about the prospects of their candidate in Rae Bareilly and in a meeting with workers Ram Naresh Yadav faced a veritable

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barrage of questions and complaints on why the Lok Dal, in spite of being in power in both the State and the Centre, cannot mobilise enough funds and vehicles in a constituency like Rae Bareilly which is not only, perhaps, the most prestigious but also one in which the caste equation and the general feeling among the people is so overwhelmingly in its favour.

One major advantage of the Lok Dal organisation in the constituency is that it is mainly made up of the old socialist hardcore cadre trained by Dr Ram Manohar Lohia. "We are children of Doctorsaab, and we don't break easy. Our leaders have gone this way and that but we cadres will hold on till the bitter end," said Dr Ganesh Chowdhury, a socialist work-

er who has been with Dr Lohia from the 1940s. They are in marked contrast to the hired workers of Mrs Gandhi and the Rajmata, who, while very active in Rae Bareilly town itself, rarely do door to door campaigning in the villages. There is also considerable bitterness among the rank and file workers in both the Indira Congress and the Janata about the local election campaign committee leaders making money out of election funds.

If the Lok Dal makes a serious effort to mobilise the backward castes the present myth about the battle between the two queens could well take quite a different turn and the velvet rug snatched out from under their feet by the common peasantry.

AJYO BOSE

ernment was better than the present one.

A: The Janata Government, during the 21 months of its rule, ran the administration efficiently. It did not commit excesses. But there was infighting, which takes place in all the Parties. To speak the truth, in 21 months the number of roads it constructed and the increase in the supply of power it brought about, the Congress Government had not been able to do in 30 years. Prices didn't rise. Even today prices are not as high as they were during the Emergency. Then one kg of sugar used to cost rupees eight or nine. The mistake the Janata Government made was that they did not publicise their achievements.

Q: Do you think that under the present political system all the problems can be solved?

A: No, if the present pattern continues, never. If the system changes according to the needs of the age, then we can hope for some improvements.

Q: How will the system change?

A: When an ailment cannot be cured, the medicine is changed. The people of this country will themselves find the medicine for this ailment.

Q: I am asking you this question because a lot of young people come to you for advice. Here, a slogan which is being raised is: 'Desh ki aasha Sanjay Gandhi' (The hope of the nation is Sanjay Gandhi). Do you think that under the leadership of Sanjay Gandhi the country will experience a new sense of direction?

A: I have been advising the youth that they should pay attention to their studies and should not be influenced into hooliganism by politicians. The youth will achieve nothing. They are pushed to face the guns and the lathis and only the politicians benefit. As far as Sanjay Gandhi is concerned, I can say that the person whose behaviour is not good cannot do society any good nor can he do any good for the country. To serve the country you need to be patriotic and sacrificing. But instead, if you are corrupt, then what will happen to the country? For the elections a tremendous amount of money is being spent. But where is the money coming from? And the people will have to eventually pay for this. During the Emergency people were told either to give Rs 5,000, Rs 10,000 or Rs 20,000 failing which they would be put in jail under MISA.

Q: What do you think of the future?

A: I think that *kalyug* will end and *satyug* will begin. In the interim period between the two, the greedy people will be beaten to pulp. Whatever Babaji has been saying will be remembered by the people.

Q: If the elections are held and the selfish people...

A: The elections will be held again because no Party will get a majority. The people will be exploited again. The farmers will be paid less for their crops and will have to buy manufactured goods at high prices.

'All the present leaders will be finished one by one'

Jai Gurudev, from Mathura is a sadhu who commands considerable support in UP, especially among the backwards. During the Emergency he was arrested under MISA. During this election, he is campaigning against Mrs Gandhi in Rae Bareilly for the Janata candidate, Mrs Vijaya Raje Scindia. SANTOSH BHARTIYA spoke to him.

Q: You are a saint, you talk of social welfare and you don't have any connection with politics. Then why are you campaigning against Mrs Gandhi? Is it because you were arrested during the Emergency?

A: In fact (during the Emergency) I was campaigning against drinking of wine and toddy and eating meat. This irked her and she had me arrested. But those who came to arrest me said that they were arresting me because I was going to kill Mrs Gandhi. Earlier, when Mrs Gandhi visited my ashram, she said that she did not touch meat or wine. But her old associate, Dinesh Singh, said something to the contrary when he came to visit me.

In jail, I was kept in a small cell, handcuffed and shackled. Mrs Gandhi apologised for this and said, 'I was not aware that you had been handcuffed and shackled. I was also not aware that things were stolen from your ashram'. I told her that during her tenure as Prime Minister women were being forcibly stripped and crores of people were robbed of their property, and you did not know of it? Then how do you know that the present Government is trying to harass you?

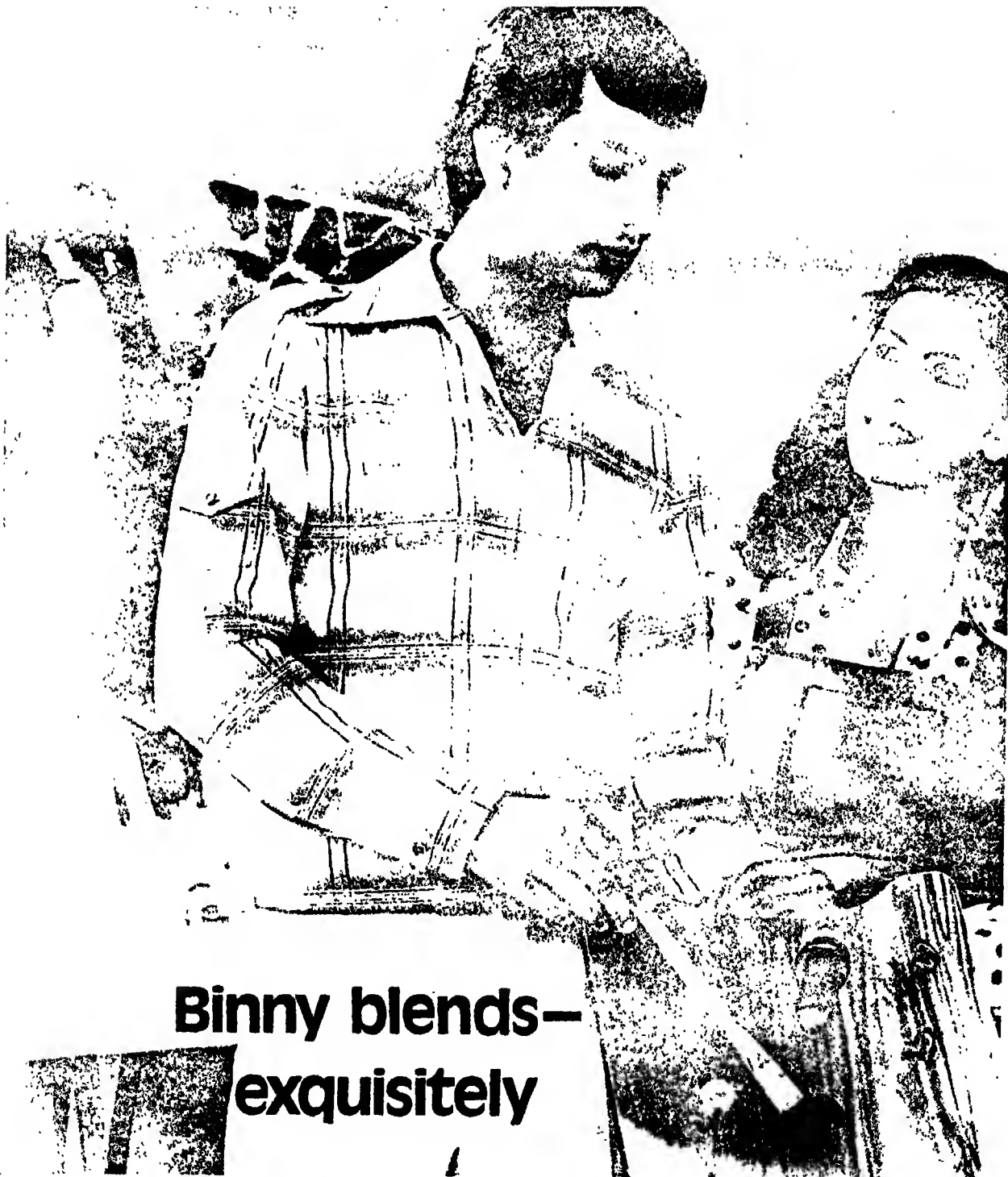
Q: Baba, do you think that if Mrs Gandhi comes to power, the excesses will be repeated?



Jai Gurudev

A: Then the population was 50 crores, there was no drought, and even then she could not provide food for the people. To solve the food crisis, she brought about forcible sterilisation and advised abortion. Then she clamped down the Emergency, suspended the fundamental rights of the people and put them in jail. Only a weak administrator resorts to an Emergency. And this took place when there was no drought. Now there is acute drought and the population has increased to 70 crores. It is clear that in such a situation if she comes to power she will take more severe measures. She has no other option but to resort to such measures.

Q: But if you ask any commoner, he will say that Mrs Gandhi's Gov-



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Q: Among the present leaders of the country who do you think has a bright future?

A: None. All are on the brink and they will be finished one by one.

Q: There are some youth among them.

A: Who are young among them?

Q: There is Chandra Shekhar and Atal Behari Vajpayee.

A: If one grain among hundreds is different, then what difference does it make? What is Chandra Shekhar's value? If a few young people advise old men whose limbs shake, who have

to clear their throats every time they have to speak and who need to sit after every two minutes, then nothing will be achieved. Who will want to bring in the youth? When Chandra Shekhar started organising the youth he was made to move out. Who else is young? You have been speaking of Sanjay Gandhi but whatever he has been made into is due to his mother's love.

Q: If Sanjay Gandhi is made Prime Minister, then...

A: (Laughs loudly) If god gives a bald man nails he is only going to hurt his own head.

come to campaign for their candidate," he said.

In direct contrast to this is Sanjay Gandhi's campaign strategy. The firm to start actively campaigning in the constituency, Sanjay has pushed in all the money, men and resources he can possibly mobilise. "Whatever you say about this boy, he has a lot of energy. He has travelled all around the constituency in the first two weeks alone. This will have a good effect on the people," said another man in Amethi. The impact of Sanjay's campaign has had mixed results. Sanjay has been hardly able to create any rapport with the people of Amethi. His speeches at the innumerable election meetings held every day were never more than 10 minutes long and the audience rarely responsive. Only when Mrs Gandhi visited Amethi, the crowds responded with some feeling.

But in spite of the lack of rapport, Sanjay has managed to create an impression that he means business. One of the slogans which he and his followers had used in 1977 and is using again this time is "Vote for Sanjay and he will turn Amethi into another London". This has had its effect especially since the sitting MP from Amethi, Ravindra Pratap Singh of the Janata Party who is recontesting the elections, has done little for the constituency, and there is a general feeling, which transcends caste barriers, that in the prevailing political confusion, Sanjay could well be the best bet.

Memories of forcible sterilization are still there but they have lost much of their intensity. The families who were affected by the sterilization drive are of course very bitter about it and a rickshaw puller whose brother was sterilized said, "I will vote for anybody except Sanjay". But this is a rare case. Generally, the stock answer of people in Amethi, when asked about sterilization, was "We know it, was bad, but I think they have learnt their lesson and won't ever try it

'Amethi will be turned into another London'

IN Amethi, what might ultimately prove crucial is the basic organisational weakness of the Lok Dal. This is amply illustrated by the election scene here. Because of the shambles in which the Lok Dal organisation is, it has lost an equally good chance as in Rae Bareilly to win.

While the backward caste composition in Amethi is not as large as in Rae Bareilly, the Lok Dal has for some time had a good hold on a large section of the electorate including the Muslims who form nearly 15 per cent of the population of this constituency. This is borne out by the fact that in the 1977 Assembly elections, unlike in Rae Bareilly, the Janata won all the Assembly seats except one in the Amethi parliamentary constituency area. And judging by the individual performance of MLAs in the Assembly elections, those belonging to the Lok Dal constituent polled as much as 52,641 votes compared to the total 68,536 votes polled by the entire Congress.

Most of these votes came from the Muslims and backward castes who together form the largest block vote in the Amethi constituency. It was with this in mind that the Lok Dal quite confidently put up a Muslim candidate, a backward, for the coming elections. The candidate, Muzaffar Hussain Khichauchi, however, within a few days of his nomination defected suddenly to Sanjay Gandhi's camp and was subsequently given an election ticket by the Indira Congress from Baharich. This was a big blow to the Lok Dal prospects in the constituency and exposed the basic inadequacy of the Party organisation. Khichauchi commands great respect among the Muslims and his hurried replacement by Mohammed Isa Chaudhury, a relatively minor politician who contested as an independent candidate in the 1977 Assembly elections from Gauriganj segment of the constitu-

ency and polled only 750 votes, is hardly adequate.

Chaudhury has hardly any election machinery to speak of and the few meetings that he addressed in the middle of December were poorly attended. "Pata nahin, yeh candidate kaisa hain. He does not have any car, nor does he go from door to door. Who is going to vote for him? We are not even sure whether he is actually the Lok Dal candidate. Janata Party workers say that Chaudhury Charan Singh is supporting Ravindra Pratap Singh. Indira Congress workers say that Khichauchi had joined the Indira Congress with the Chaudhury's consent. We are confused here and nobody has come to explain to us what is the real situation," said a Muslim gujjar on the outskirts of Amethi town. "Lok Dal will become Lop Dal, babuji", said a tea stall vendor, near the Amethi railway station. "They are all fools. They do not have money, they don't have workers and not a single big leader has

Sanjay Gandhi in Amethi



again". The main weakness of the Janata election chances in the constituency is the reputation of Ravindra Pratap Singh: People complain that he is a goonda who has little concern for the people and is only interested in making money.

Drawing his support mainly from thakurs who form about 11 per cent of the total electorate, Ravindra Pratap Singh lacks the organisation and money power which Sanjay has thrown into his campaign. His chances however improved slightly in the last few weeks of December when the Rajmata sent him some of her vehicles and some resources from

Rae Bareilly to help him. "Dehikye babuji, in Amethi today we have little to choose from. Both Sanjay as well as Pratap Singh are bad. Both have done no work for Amethi. We don't know now who we will vote for. We will decide only on polling day itself," said a panwala in Amethi.

Along with this confusion is a growing tension in Amethi town and large-scale violence could well be started by Singh's men since their calculation is that as Sanjay is an outsider, there is more chances of him being blamed for any violence than Singh.

AOJOY BOSE

Bihar

Banka: Can Madhu Limaye save his seat?

IN Banka, the constituency of Madhu Limaye, the battle is going to be between two castes—the yadavs and the rajputs. The other castes are merely taking sides. The yadavs and the rajputs have around a lakh voters each. There are also 35,000 Muslims, 55,000 koiris, 65,000 brahmins, 60,000 harijans and 50,000 adivasis. Madhu Limaye, the Lok Dal nominee is fighting the election on the strength of the backward votes. The young Janata Party candidate Janardan Yadav, is a yadav and a State Minister in the Ram Sundar Das Cabinet. The Congress (I) candidate is a rajput, Chandrashekhar Singh.

The Banka Parliamentary constituency is spread out over three districts—Santhal Parganas, Monghyr and Bhagalpur. The area is a hilly terrain. About 40 per cent of the land is cultivable and of this 25-26 per cent is irrigated. Most of the land is owned by the rajput landlords closely followed by the yadavs and bhumihars.

Madhu Limaye had won this seat in 1977 and he had got about 2,00,000 votes. At that time too, Chandrashekhar Singh had been his main opponent. The political situation has changed since then. The Janata Party broke up, the Lok Dal was formed and the backward castes in Bihar rose. This will definitely have an impact on the coming elections. Chandrashekhar Singh is a staunch leader of the rajputs. He had also been a State Minister. He has been winning the Jhajha and Chakai Assembly seats since 1952. The Janata Party nominee, Janardan Yadav, was an activist in the JP movement and had been a Minister in the Karpoori Thakur Ministry. In fact, he is still a Minister in the Ram Sundar Das cabinet. But in a sense he is unique: he is not just a leader of a particular caste or a Party but he is recognised as a leader by all sections of the people of the area. According to a Lok

Dal supporter, Mr Hashim, Mr Yadav will get a number of Muslim votes of the area.

The Parliamentary constituency has six Assembly segments. Madhu Limaye has some plus points. Out of the six MLAs of the area, four are from the Lok Dal. The other two are Janata MLAs.

The entire constituency is badly affected by the drought. But the Government is doing precious little, as the entire Government administrative machinery is busy with the elections. The situation is being exploited by the political Parties in different ways: the Lok Dal is blaming the Janata Government in Bihar, the Janata Party is blaming the Lok Dal Government at the Centre for not providing

Madhu Limaye



enough aid, and the Congress (I) is blaming both the State Government and the Central Government for the plight of the people. The rising prices of essential commodities have also become an election issue in this constituency, as all over the country.

In Banka town there are 24,000 yadav votes, 20,000 koiri votes, 20,000 Muslim votes and the rajput and Brahmin votes are 5,000 each. Thirty per cent of the backward votes will go to the Lok Dal. The remaining backward votes will go to Janardan Yadav and the rajput and the brahmin votes will go to the Congress (I). In Amarapur from where Janardan Yadav is the MLA, the rajputs and the yadavs have 25,000 votes each. The Muslims and the bhumihars closely follow with 14,000 and 15,000 votes respectively. There are also 10,000 koiri votes. Fifty per cent of the yadav votes will be shared by Madhu Limaye and Janardan Yadav. The koiri votes will go to the Lok Dal. Since Sukhnarain Singh, a local rajput leader will be backing the Lok Dal, it is expected that some rajput votes will go to the Lok Dal. The rest of the rajput votes will go to the Congress (I). The bhumihar votes will be divided. Fifteen to twenty per cent of the Muslim votes will go to Janardan Yadav and the rest will be divided between Congress (I) and the Lok Dal. The urban Muslims are against the Congress (I). Madhu Limaye will also get the Christian and Muslim votes because of his stand on the issues of cow slaughter and conversion. And among the Muslims too there is a division between the backwards and the forwards.

There are two blocks in the Katoria Assembly constituency. The Bausi block consists of rajputs, Muslims and koiris. The local Lok Dal MLA is not influential. In Katoria, there are many yadavs and the votes will be divided along caste lines. According to the Muslim voters, the Congress (I) will come out on top, followed by the Lok Dal. The Jhajha Assembly constituency consists of thousands of railway workers and biri makers who can influence the voting pattern in this area. The biri makers are fed up with Janata rule and the railway workers cannot forget the humiliations of the Congress regime. The situation is fluid and the main contenders are the Lok Dal and the Congress (I). The Deoghar Assembly constituency is dominated by the Hindu priests who support the Congress (I). It is, therefore, expected that the Congress (I) will poll the majority of the votes from this constituency. The backward votes will go to the Lok Dal since the MLA from Deoghar, Bina Rani, is from the Lok Dal.

In the final analysis, it is clear that the main battle will be between Madhu Limaye and Chandrashekhar Singh. If the Janata Party candidate was not a backward, Madhu Limaye would have been in a more advantageous position. Janardan Yadav is going to divide the backward votes.

ARUN RANJAN

Orissa

Biju Patnaik is far ahead

IN 1977 when Biju Patnaik visited Kendrapara for electioneering there were flowers, money, sympathy, love and, finally, votes for him. This time the votes will be there but not so many. No wonder, whereas he went to Kendrapara for only two days last time, he has already spent six days there this time and is likely to spend a couple of days more at the end. But the fact that he is winning hands down is being accepted by everyone in spite of the Indira ripples.

The most important factor in his favour is what he had done for his electors after the devastating cyclone of 1971 which had taken a toll of over 10,000 lives. He was then representing Rajnagar, an Assembly segment of the Kendrapara Lok Sabha constituency. Besides, the people of Kendrapara think Biju to be the "local boy" who has done well. His two important contenders, Mr S. N. Dwivedy of the Janata and the unknown Gaya Chandra Bhuyan (Congress I) are too weak. Initially, the Orissa unit of the Janata Party selected the leader of the Opposition to contest from Kendrapara. As the rumour goes, Mr Mullick himself opted out and favoured Mr Dwivedy in his place. Reports say that Dr H. K. Mahtab played an important role in persuading Mr Dwivedy as well as the Janata high command for a change. Mr Dwivedy had represented this constituency three times earlier from 1957 to 1971. After his defeat in 1971 Mr Dwivedy had virtually retired from electoral politics and as the chairman of the Rourkela Mazdoor Sabha, spent most of his time there. Since then he has had no touch with Kendrapara.

The Congress (I) candidate on the other hand, is a negative factor for the Indira ripple. He does not have any contact with the people of the constituency. Since no one wanted to face Biju in Kendrapara, he volunteered and got the ticket. Attempts were even made to wean away Mr Bhagabat Mohanty from the Congress (U) and make him the Congress (I) candidate. Many Congress (I) workers are not willing to work for him and he is unable to cash in on Mrs Indira Gandhi's visit to Kendrapara. Her meeting was, however, very largely attended. During his six days of extensive touring in that area, Biju has touched almost all gram panchayats and got a good reception everywhere. There were not many public meetings but at places the crowd just swelled and impromptu meetings had to be held. Also, he has a band of very trusted workers. Even after Prahallad Mullick left many who were supposedly close to him have stayed on with Biju. Tapas Das, the scheduled caste MLA from Pattamundei for instance. It is true that of the seven Assembly segments three are represented by

the Janata Party and four by the Lok Dal, but that does not make any difference. Biju will lead substantially from the Patkura Assembly segment which is represented by Mullick himself. Of the seven segments, five — Kendrapara, Rajnagar, Aul, Patkura and Pattamundei—are in Kendrapara sub-division and the two others—Mahanga and Kisennagar—are in Cuttack Sadar sub-division. As the old and venerable Dr Musi Babu of Pattamundei puts it, "Biju will lead by so many votes from the

five Kendrapara sub-division segments that even if he does not get any votes from Cuttack Sadar, he will win".

There is a feeling among the scheduled castes in the constituency that if Indira Gandhi is voted for then the "OLR cases" will be resumed. The OLR cases in the present context means share cropper cases for land. Most of these cases have been stayed by higher courts and are awaiting disposal. As a result the share croppers are unable to get the land as per the Orissa Land Reforms Act. Another factor that weighs in favour of the Congress (I) is the price rise. This is a major complaint.

SWARUP JENA

Chandra Shekhar defies arithmetic



he is the sure winner. Rameswar Singh said: "Chandra Shekhar's stature is large and he is well-recognised today. This was not so when he did not hold the post of president of the Janata Party. I told Chaudhury Charan Singh that if he made Chandra Shekhar the Party president the backward rajputs would unite. Charan Singh supported Chandra Shekhar for this reason. Chandra Shekhar says he has raised the prestige of Ballia but I say he has done nothing for the country. If he would not have sent Raj Narain out of the Party, the Janata Party would not have broken."

How would Chandra Shekhar be defeated, I ask him a second time. Rameswar Singh said: "There are 40,000 brahmins, a lakh thakurs, 1,30,000 yadavs, 25,000 bhumihars, 1,00,000 harijans, 15,000 Muslims, and around 70,000 backwards in Ballia. The Lok Dal will get 60 per cent of the backward votes and around 80 per cent of the yadavs' votes. Among the harijan votes, 50 per cent will go to the Janata Party, 30 per cent to the Indira Congress and 20 per cent will go to the Lok Dal. The bhumihar and the Muslim votes will be divided. The brahmins will vote for the Congress(I) although they will vote for the winning brahmin more than the one who is going to lose. Janswar Mishra is the winning brahmin and the Ballia brahmins will vote for him".

If Rameswar Singh's calculations have been accepted by Charan Singh and Raj Narain, then the loser is certainly going to be Chandra Shekhar. The reports coming out of Ballia are, however, different.

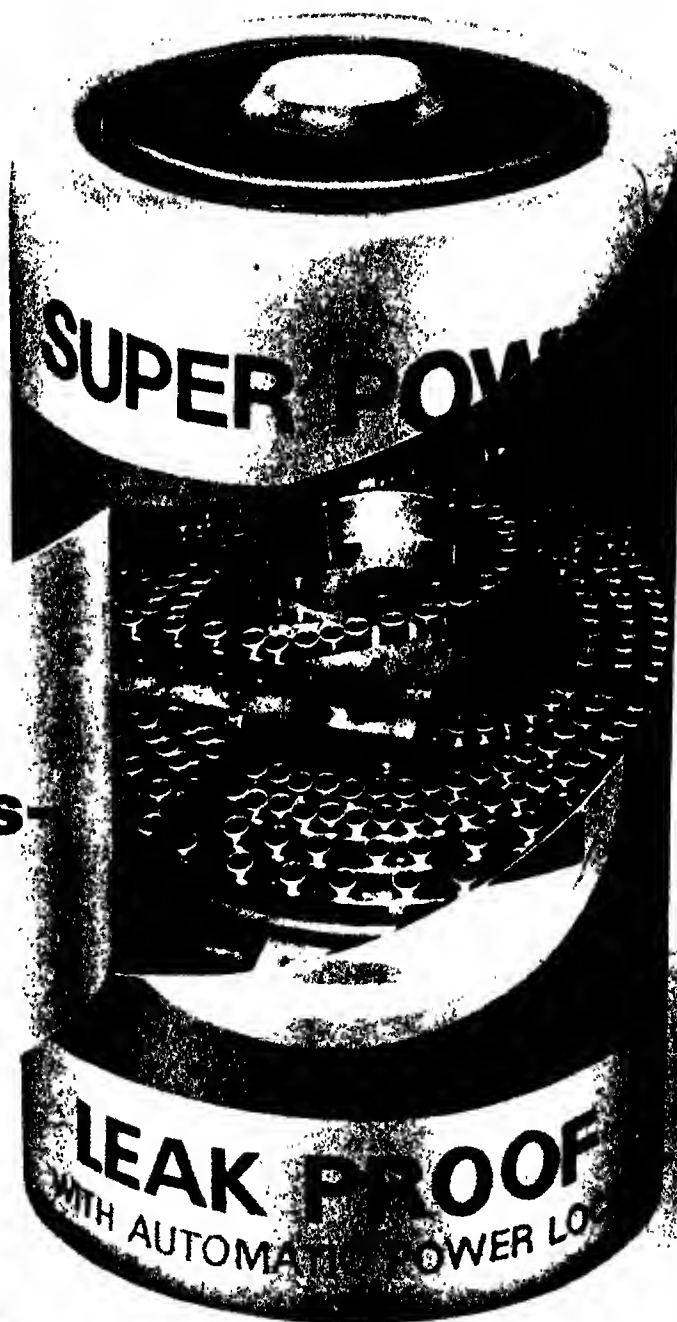
SANTOSH BHARTIYA

IT was the Rajya Sabha MP, Rameswar Singh, who had advised Mr. Charan Singh to let Janswar Mishra contest the election from Ballia against Mr. Chandra Shekhar. The Lok Dal working president, Mr. Raj Narain, was against the idea but when Rameswar Singh explained the arithmetic of the problem, Raj Narain agreed. When I asked Rameswar Singh why he did not contest the election from Ballia although he is a native of Ballia and also a thakur, he replied: "If I contested the election or even if Sivmangal Singh contested, I would have lost and Chandra Shekhar would have won. The Congress(I) would have won. I wanted to defeat both Chandra Shekhar and the Indira Congress and for that reason I chose Janswar who is the best man available. Moreover, I did not contest because I am in the Rajya Sabha, as it is".

I wanted to know his calculations since even those opposing Chandra Shekhar are certain that

No.
500

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Haryana

Bhiwani : Can Bansilal win ?

NOTWITHSTANDING the loud claims of popularity by the three main Parties—the Congress(I), the Lok Dal and the Janata, an air of uncertainty prevails over the prestigious constituency of Bhiwani where the former Chief Minister of Haryana, Mr. Bansilal, is locked in a tight contest with Mrs Chandrawati of the Lok Dal. She had defeated him by an overwhelming margin in 1977 in the same constituency. Another contender is Mr. Balwant Rai Tayal of the Janata. The only certain factor about the election is that votes will be divided on caste lines—the jats throwing their weight behind either the Congress(I) or the Lok Dal candidate, the harijans and banias voting for the Janata. And going by caste arithmetic, the logical result of this should be a victory for either Mrs Chandrawati or Mr. Bansilal.

Ashok Kumar (40), a small landowner said that the real contest will be between Tayal and Bansilal and their chances are still 50-50. "Chandrawati will get some votes in the villages", he said, wiping his nose, "but these she will get through the Chaudhury, not for herself or for Devi Lal". He claimed that of the two Parties, the Janata's chances are stronger, but "ab kuch nahin kehe sakte. Janata ne bhi kuch kiya hai yahan par Bansilal ne bahut kuch kiya. This road, this hospital, these were all his (Bansilal's) work", he said pointing to the area in front of the Clock Tower which was demolished during the Emergency. "But what about the excesses?" "Yes, there was some unpleasantness, but a lot of work was also done," he replied, in the typical see-only-the-good fashion that has lately become popular. But he would rather still keep his fingers crossed: "Ab koi pata nahin lagta." (No one can say anything about the election results).

Narinder, a roadside sweet shop-owner on the outskirts of Bhiwani asserts: "I think the Lok Dal is the strongest here, they are winning". Asked to explain, he said: "The Government has done no work here. And even if the Janata Government wants to do work in the villages, they are prevented by the rich, the zamindars, who know too well that helping the poor is a threat to their interests. 'Garib ko pani nahi de kyonkin hampe bura asar hoga', they say".

Kishan Lal (28) says that the Congress (I) will definitely win. "Whatever happened here during Bansilal's time was good. Agreed there were some nasty incidents but it is the Government officers rather than Ministers of the Congress who

were responsible for the *nasbandi*. They were promised radios and TVs, they were greedy, and thus took to rough methods", he said in a low voice.

A former Government officer who is also with Mr. Bansilal is full of admiration for the systematic manner in which the Congress (I) is con-

ducting its election campaign in the constituency. He said that during his time Mr. Bansilal used to tour his constituency at least twice every year. Each time he visited a village a *shamiana* would be erected and popular grievances would be presented to him on behalf of the villagers as a charter of demands which he would look into. Mr. Bansilal would also be accompanied by "bhajan parties" who would sing the praises of his Government. (One of the songs goes like this: "Bansilal dabba kholega, Indira roti poyegi.") Mr. Bansilal's son, Surinder, who is conducting the Congress (I) election campaign for his father, is methodically following the same style.

The entire constituency consists of

Raj Narain poses a tough challenge

"I HAVE verified four times through my sources and I have come to the conclusion that Chandra Tripathi will not win in the election. Lokpati (Kamalapati's son and the husband of Chandra Tripathi) can try from any place for her but even he will not win in the election". This was said by Indira Gandhi to some of those who are close to Mr. Kamalapati Tripathi when the famous "Bahuji" (as Chandra Tripathi is commonly known) made her demand for a Lok Sabha ticket. Mrs Gandhi became an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the members of the Tripathi family who were aspiring for Lok Sabha seats. Only Kamalapati Tripathi would have been able to remove the obstacle but with the coming in of Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna even his efforts were not enough.

Kamalapati Tripathi himself faces a tough fight from the former winner of Rae Bareilly, Mr. Raj Narain, who has challenged him in his traditional seat of Varanasi. Initially there was a lot of talk on who would oppose Mr. Raj Narain. Since I. S. Johar had declared his intentions of opposing Raj Narain it was assumed that he would be given the Congress(I) ticket to contest the election from Varanasi. I. S. Johar had also rendered services to Mrs. Gandhi during the Emergency. Mr. Kamalapati Tripathi was hesitant to contest the elections from Varanasi since all the equations were against him. Further, Varanasi is one of those towns where no Indira wave exists. There are a number of kauri voters in the electorate who support the CPI. And since there is an electoral understanding between the CPI

and the Lok Dal, Raj Narain will gain. The bhumihar voters amount to nearly 15 per cent of the electorate who will also support Raj Narain. The same is the case with the Muslims, the yadavs and the Bengali voters. Although the brahmins and the harijans will favour the Congress (I) around 10 to 15 per cent of these votes will go to Mr. Raj Narain. The railway workers, the socialists and a large majority of the students will also favour the Lok Dal. It can be safely said that this highly populated constituency will help the chances of Raj Narain. However, Mrs Gandhi will want to teach a lesson to Mr. Narain.

Raj Narain chose the constituency after a lot of searching. In Varanasi, too, there is a lot of dissension in the Lok Dal ranks. While in his native village of Gangapur, he was asked what he had done for Varanasi, his Party workers started fighting among themselves in Patel Dharamshala. In spite of these adverse circumstances, the situation now is that Netaji's supporters have united and are now working for him. Raj Narain might have to face a little opposition from the CPI leader and a man from his own community, Mr. Satyanarain Singh. If Raj Narain were not to contest the elections Mr. Singh would have been a sure winner. Lately some secret CPI meetings have been taking place in Godholla Chowk.

Mr. Raj Narain started his political career from Varanasi and the electorate knows him well. It remains to be seen whether he achieves his objective from Varanasi.

SANTOSH BHARTIYA

nine assembly segments, namely, Bhiwani (total votes 76,323, now with the Janata); Vadhra (total votes 81,563, with Janata); Dadri (78,258, with Lok Dal); Mundhal Khurd (73,936, with Lok Dal); Tosham (81,222, with Congress(I)—this, incidentally, is where Mr. Bansi Lal's son, Surinder was elected from); Loharu (83,717, with Lok Dal); Bawani Khara (a reserved constituency 77,784 with Janata); Hansi (77,466, with Janata) and Adampur (78,747, with Janata—the assembly candidate from here is the Chief Minister Mr. Bhajan Lal himself). The caste break-up of the constituency is 2,26,593 jats, who might go with either the Lok Dal or the Congress (I), 60,960 brahmins, who are known to be opposed to Bansi Lal, 32,790 mahajan banias, who will definitely support the Janata, 38,638 rajputs, who might support the Lok Dal, because of their memory of the Rewasa scandal, 29,234 ahirs who are largely behind the Lok Dal, gujjars sainis numbering about 19,000, who are largely jat supporters, bishnois who are jats numbering 14,357, who are said to be divided between the Lok Dal and the Congress(I), Punjabis from Multan number 35,681 who might support the Janata, because of the Party's understanding with Akalis in Punjab, phamars

number 71,842 who will vote largely for the Janata. In a number of harijan-dominated villages the gaon sabhas are said to have resolved to support Babuji. Balmikis, including sweepers, etc, who number 15,388, are mostly supporters of either the Congress(I) or the Janata, and the backwards including the dhannuk (small artisans, labourers, washermen, etc) who number 98,394—a massive vote bank—are largely with the Janata or the Congress(I).

The jat influence is strong in the belt around Rohtak and Sonapat, to which Sir Chhotu Ram, the former Development Minister in the 1939 Sikander Hayat Khan Ministry, belongs. Sir Ram had set the pace with his virulently anti-Congress views, which has left an impression on this area. The common jat is a hater of the Congress because of its identification with moneylenders of the area with whom they had persistent quarrels. Ram had started opening special rest houses for the Rohtak jats, and for the contemporary jat, his good work is being carried on by Chaudhury Charan Singh and Devi Lal. Since they number the largest single community in Bhiwani, the scales are definitely tipped in favour of a Lok Dal victory.

NIRMAL MITRA

Madhya Pradesh

Chindwara: Congress (I) ahead

CHINDWARA was in darkness when we entered. V. K. Saklecha, CM of Madhya Pradesh had just finished addressing a meeting. According to most people we met, the response had been poor. He had come to canvass for the Janata candidate from Chindwara, Pratul Chand Dwivedi who is being opposed by Kamal Nath of the Congress (I), a Calcutta businessman close to the Gandhi family, who is likely to win. The others in the fray are P. K. Thakur of the CPI and Mr Jaffri of the Lok Dal.

Chindwara, a coal-rich region is an underdeveloped and backward area where the adivasis form 35 per cent of the population. There is no broad gauge railway linking it with Nagpur and no proper rail facilities for carrying coal from the collieries in Parasia and Damua to the district headquarters in Chindwara. Industrially, this region, which has a population of 7,89,413 (1971 census) and an electorate of 568,741, draws a blank.

In the March 1977 elections, Gargi Shankar Mishra of the Congress had contested against Pratul Chand Dwivedi and won the elections by a margin of around 2,000 votes. But this

year, he has been given the ticket from the neighbouring constituency of Seoni. When at the beginning of December, Gargi Shankar Mishra's name had been proposed as the candidate from Chindwara, the six Congress (I) MLAs of the constituency put their foot down, met Mrs Gandhi and demanded that a different candidate be put up. Their reason: Gargi Shankar Mishra who hails from Nagpur had no chance of winning. He had lost his popularity as he had not visited the constituency even once after he became the MP. As a matter of fact, while he was an MP, a delegation from Chindwara had gone to meet him at Nagpur with a request for a broad gauge railway line from Nagpur to Chindwara, but apparently Mr Mishra did not even meet them. Following the agitation by the six MLAs, Kamal Nath, who had been tipped as the Congress (I) candidate from Betul was brought over to Chindwara. Said an INTUC worker: "If Gargi Shankar Mishra had contested he would have lost. But Kamal Nath is a new face in this area and people are yet to try him. He will win." Like Gargi Shankar Mishra, Kamal Nath is an outsider to this area and this has been made an

issue by Pratul Chand Dwivedi, a local RSS man.

Says Mr Dwivedi: "I am a local man. I have been working as a social worker in this region and the people know me. I will get their votes". But as Kamal Nath told this correspondent: "So what if I am not a local candidate. The same can be said for Mrs Vijaya Raje Scindia and Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee. Besides, nobody is going to give me any votes. They will vote for Mrs Gandhi." This is indeed one factor on which the entire Congress (I) is depending. As a matter of fact, quite a few people are not even aware of Kamal Nath and some know him as "the rich man from Calcutta" but they all say that they will vote for the 'panja'. On December 13, Mrs Gandhi addressed two meetings in the Chindwara constituency—one at Chindwara and the other at Chandameta. And this, the Congress (I) circles believe, will fetch in the vote in the only constituency in North India which had returned a Congress candidate in the March '77 elections when there was the strong Janata wave which is now absent.

And this is precisely what will help Kamal Nath even further. "The people want stability after two years of Janata misrule," said Kamal Nath and no efforts have been spared to get this message across to the people through posters and graffiti. "Vote for Indira Gandhi and save the country" proclaim posters all over the constituency. Again, due to the shortage and rising prices of essential commodities and corruption, people have become disillusioned with the Janata Party. As a peasant in Jammunia, who has decided to vote for the Congress (I) said: "I will vote for the Congress (I). The prices have been rising and there is nothing for the poor. During 30 years of Congress rule the prices did not rise as much as during the two years of Janata rule." The Janata, instead, is highlighting the issue of democracy versus authoritarianism and the local issue of a railway line from the collieries of Parasia to Chindwara. "Chindwara has remained backward precisely because of the lack of transport facilities from Parasia to Chindwara. We will get it done," said Pratul Dwivedi.

Again, the Congress (I) has more resources and is campaigning vigorously, which the Janata has been unable to match. There are Congress (I) slogans, ditties and posters all over the constituency and Congress (I) workers move around in jeeps with microphones fitted on them. The Janata canvassing, is, by comparison lacking in spirit and the enthusiasm among the Janata workers that was there in 1977 is missing. Said Biswakarma of Poama village in Parasia: "There is hardly any canvassing by the Janata boys this time. The spirit of 1977 is missing. And those who voted for the Janata will vote for the Congress (I) this time". Mr Dwivedi explained that the Janata believes "in doing man-to-man contact and not through the microphone. Be-

sides, in comparison to Kamal Nath, I am a poor man. We have manpower with us, moneypower is with them". Whatever the reason, the enthusiasm among the Janata workers is absent this year.

The southern areas of Chindwara—Sausar and Pandurna—adjoin the Vidharva region of Maharashtra, where Mrs Gandhi is extremely popular. In the previous elections the Congress had won 9 out of the 11 seats from Vidharva. The people of Sausar and Pandurna are Marathi-speaking and identify themselves with the people of Vidharva and therefore their sympathies lie with Mrs Gandhi. In the 1977 elections, the Congress candidate had led by 9,551 votes from Pandurna.

In the northern areas of Chindwara—Parasia, Damua and Jamal—are the collieries which account for most of the labour force of Chindwara. And the union which is strongest here is the INTUC which is supporting Kamal Nath. The next strongest union is the BMS and the third strongest

is the AITUC which is supporting the CPI candidate, P. K. Thakur, who is expected to get a share of the votes from this region. Which means, in effect, that there will be a triangular contest in his area with the Congress (I) benefitting in the bargain.

In Chindwara, Muslims account for about one-sixth of the population and their votes are with the Congress (I). Said a Muslim youth in Singuri village in Chindwara: "How can the Muslims vote for the Janata? During their rule there were so many communal riots. We will vote for Indiraji". A certain section of the Muslim vote will also go to the Muslim Lok Dal candidate, Mr Jaffri.

The Janata Party candidate, Pratul Dwivedi, may, however, get a majority from Amarvada and Chourai and the votes of the urban intelligentsia. But Kamal Nath is likely to win the elections from Chindwara by getting a majority from the other six Assembly constituencies.

SAUMITRA BANERJEE

Jammu and Kashmir

National Conference already one up

AS always, the issues in the mid-term elections in the sensitive border State of Jammu and Kashmir are historical and ethnic. The memory of 1953, the State's subsequent alienation from national life and the continuing deep mistrust between the two major communities—Hindus and Muslims—are some of the factors that may determine the Kashmiri voter's choice of representatives in Parliament. And following Dr Farooq Abdullah's unopposed election from Srinagar after his only rival, Dr Nazir Ahmed, withdrew at the last minute, the feeling is once again gaining ground that the ruling National Conference will be a force too strong to resist.

The Party itself, however, is facing problems both from within and outside its ranks. First, there is the old rivalry between Sheikh Abdullah and Maulvi Farooq, the young sunni religious leader, presently the Mirwaiz (a religious title). Maulvi Farooq is the leader of a faction called the "bakras" (so named for their beards), while the Sheikh is the leader of the "shers". The derivation is from Sheikh Abdullah's rebellion against the former Maharaja of Kashmir, Hari Singh, during which the Mirwaiz, then Maulvi Yusuf Shah, who is the uncle of the present Mirwaiz, had taken the side of the Maharaja. The Sheikh and his followers thus came to be called "shers". After Independence, when Sheikh Abdullah was made Kashmir's Prime Minister, Maulvi Shah fled to Pakistan. The enmity conti-

nues between the present Mirwaiz and the Sheikh. The "bakras" have an impressive following among roughly 50 per cent of the sunnis in Srinagar, while the other half follow the Sheikh. In the last Parliamentary poll, the National Conference activists are alleged to have captured booths in the constituency, and prevented the "bakras", who had declared their opposition to the Party, from voting.

Secondly, the ouster of Mirza Afzal Beg from the Party earned the Sheikh another enemy, though not dangerous enough to cause alarm. The circumstances in which Mr Beg was asked to resign as Deputy Chief Minister suggest that the Sheikh was afraid of his growing influence in the Party ranks. The Sheikh had taken the step shortly after a debacle in the Srinagar Council elections in which Mr Beg's supporters managed to get 31 instead of the 13 votes that were allocated to them by the Party. Mr Beg subsequently formed his own Party, the Inqilabi National Conference, which has just one MLA in the State Assembly and a pocket of support in Anantnag. Mr Beg's popularity, however, is in doubt. It is said that he owed his eminence in State politics entirely to the Sheikh, and without the support of the latter, is a virtual non-entity.

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, for more than two decades a father figure in the State, is now old and ill, suffering from a recurrent heart ailment. The resultant rivalry for succession involves three prominent

members of his family—his wife, Begum Abdullah, his eldest son, Dr Farooq Abdullah, and his son-in-law, Mr Gulam Mohammad Shah, known popularly as "Gulshah". Begum Abdullah's chances of taking over as Chief Minister hinge on the possibility of her being accepted as a compromise candidate since those of Dr Farooq and Gulshah are evenly balanced. Dr Farooq, whose charisma and liberal views have instantly endeared him to members of all communities—Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs—is popularly tipped as Kashmir's heir apparent. Even so, he is widely considered less qualified to succeed his father than his brother-in-law, Gulshah, who is a Minister in his father's Cabinet. Gulshah, about 50, is respected for his sacrifices during his participation in the Sheikh's famous quit-Kashmir movement, at which time Dr Farooq was studying medicine abroad. Dr Farooq returned to Kashmir only three years ago, after his father became Chief Minister. Gulshah is shrewd enough to become the leader of the State. In fact, Dr Farooq's election to Parliament is seen as a ploy arranged by Gulshah to remove him from the State's political scene.

As for the national Parties—the Janata, Congress (I), Lok Dal and Congress (U)—they are hardly any threat to the National Conference. Except for the Janata all lack anything approaching a popular base. The result is that the only gains these Parties can hope to make shall be based on the personalities of their candidates. Besides, both the Janata and the Congress (I) are riven with dissension. In the Janata there are two very obvious groups, one led by Maulana Masoodi and the other by Abdul Rasheed Kabli. When the Party's central election committee had nominated Dr Nazir Ahmed and Gulam Nabi Sugami to contest from the Srinagar and Baramulla constituencies respectively, the Maulana protested against the decision. Both nominations had been recommended by Mr Kabli. Later, the Maulana had his way. Mr Sugami did not file his nomination papers, and asked the Party high command to inquire into the Maulana's anti-Party activities. Dr Ahmed pulled out of the fray on the last day for withdrawal of nominations, conceding Dr Farooq Abdullah a victory by default. Another group of Janata leaders in Jammu also protested against the CPP's decision to oppose Dr Karan Singh, the Congress (U) candidate, in Dhampur.

There are also sharp differences in the Congress (I) rank and file over the Party's decision to form an alliance with the National Conference. The Sheikh is himself distrustful of Congress (I) workers in the State, and is especially bitter about the way they had violated the alliance with his Party in the last parliamentary poll. National Conference spokesmen allege that the Congress (I) had worked against their candidates in Jammu and Srinagar (the two Parties had divided the State's



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six constituencies between themselves evenly, taking three each) and blame the Congress (I) for their defeat in Jammu. The reason for this was that the Sheikh had then negotiated directly with the Congress (I)'s Central leaders, in preference to the State PCC. The Sheikh has apparently done it again, but this time he has been careful enough not to give more than one seat — Jammu, the seat his Party had lost in 1977 — to the Congress (I). The rationale for continuing the NC-Congress (I) alliance is that it was Mrs Gandhi who had brought the Sheikh back to politics and his special relationship with the Nehru family. Nevertheless, there is always the fear that the Congress (I)

ranks might revolt at the last minute, as they did last time.

The sole deciding factor in the approaching elections, and the politics of the State, however, promises to be the Sheikh's image as an undisputed leader. The leaders of the other Parties — be it the National Conference, Janata, Congress (I), or even the rebel National Conference — were mostly drawn from the Sheikh's Plebiscite Front, and are his estranged colleagues. Even Mohammad Shafi Quereshi, who is contesting from Anantnag, was once a strong votary of the same principles the National Conference stands for today.

NIRMAL MITRA

not get bhumihaar votes. The rajput votes, which constitute 10 per cent of the electorate, will go to Mr N. K. Singh of the Janata. During a tour of the constituency this correspondent found that Dhanbad's battle of the ballot has no issue. Voters are divided in the separate classes: the urban and the rural. The division in urban votes would give an advantage to the Congress (I) candidate. Though the Congress has also fielded Mr S. P. Rai as its candidate, he will be nowhere in the final race. Most of the people, whom this correspondent met, expressed doubts about the possibility of Rai keeping his security deposit intact. Being a joint secretary of the INTUC, Mr Rai will certainly share traditional Congress and bhumihaar votes.

Bihar

No cake walk for A. K. Roy

THERE is such an imbalance in the social fabric of Dhanbad, which is the largest industrial town in Bihar, that the poor have become poorer and rich richer. Nearly 90 per cent of the town's total population are the down-trodden, living in slums. All the wealth and resources have been cornered by a class which does not constitute more than 10 per cent of the population. Officers, businessmen, moneylenders, *pahalwans* and trade union leaders fall in the class. In spite of Dhanbad being an adivasi, villagers-dominated constituency, no adivasi leadership has emerged. As in the 1977 elections, this time too, the three contestants will be non-adivasi, non-Harijan and non-miners and once again the leadership will go into the hands of the upper class.

The so-called 'wave' usually felt on the eve of the polls is not there for any of the candidates this time. Therefore, if the public is frustrated due to the economic and law and order conditions the Congress (I) is in a better position. Mounting public problems like the scarcity of kerosene, diesel, electricity and rising prices of almost all the essential commodities have given a new life to the Congress (I)'s image in Dhanbad. The law and order situation has reached a point of no-return. This is evident from a series of murders, dacoities and other violent incidents.

One of the striking features of the Dhanbad Lok Sabha constituency has been bogus voting and rigging on a large scale in colliery areas dominated by rajput and bhumihaar lathial-cum-trade union leaders. And to a large extent this will decide the fate of the election. Bogus voting, booth capturing and rigging are expected this time on a much larger scale. Mr S. D. Singh has a stronghold in the

Kustore-Jharia area. Another Janata leader, Mr Tapesawar Singh, will take responsibility of the Chasnala-Patherdih area. Similarly the Congress (I) will bank on Dhanbad proper. It has been learnt from reliable sources that the Janata candidate supported by Mr S. D. Singh is planning to capture at least 100 booths in the Jharia-Kustore area to ensure his victory.

Dhanbad is one of the few Parliamentary seats where most of the important Parties — the Congress (I), Janata and the Left — have a good base. In the 1977 Assembly elections, out of six seats the Janata bagged only one seat, the Congress and Mr A. K. Roy's Bihar Colliery Kamgar Union (BCKU) bagged two seats each and one was taken by an Independent candidate. In the 1977 election, the Janata Party had extended its support to Mr A. K. Roy, who defeated his nearest Congress rival by a margin of 1,41,789 votes, securing 2,05,435 votes, which amounted to 67.02 per cent of the total votes polled. This time Janata Party has fielded its own candidate. Mr Surya Deo Singh, the Janata MLA from Jharia, in spite of his friendly relations with Janata President Chandra Shekhar could not get the Janata ticket. He, however, managed it for his friend's son Mr Narendra Kumar Singh. Being an 'outsider', Mr N. K. Singh is yet to familiarise himself among the voters of Dhanbad.

As he is an MLA from Dhanbad, the Congress (I) nominee, Mr Yogesh Prasad Yogesh, has an edge over his Janata rival, Mr N. K. Singh. Apart from the traditional Congress votes on caste lines, the Congress (I) candidate will be able to attract a substantial number of harijan votes. Though Mr Yogesh can also expect muslim and brahmin support, he may

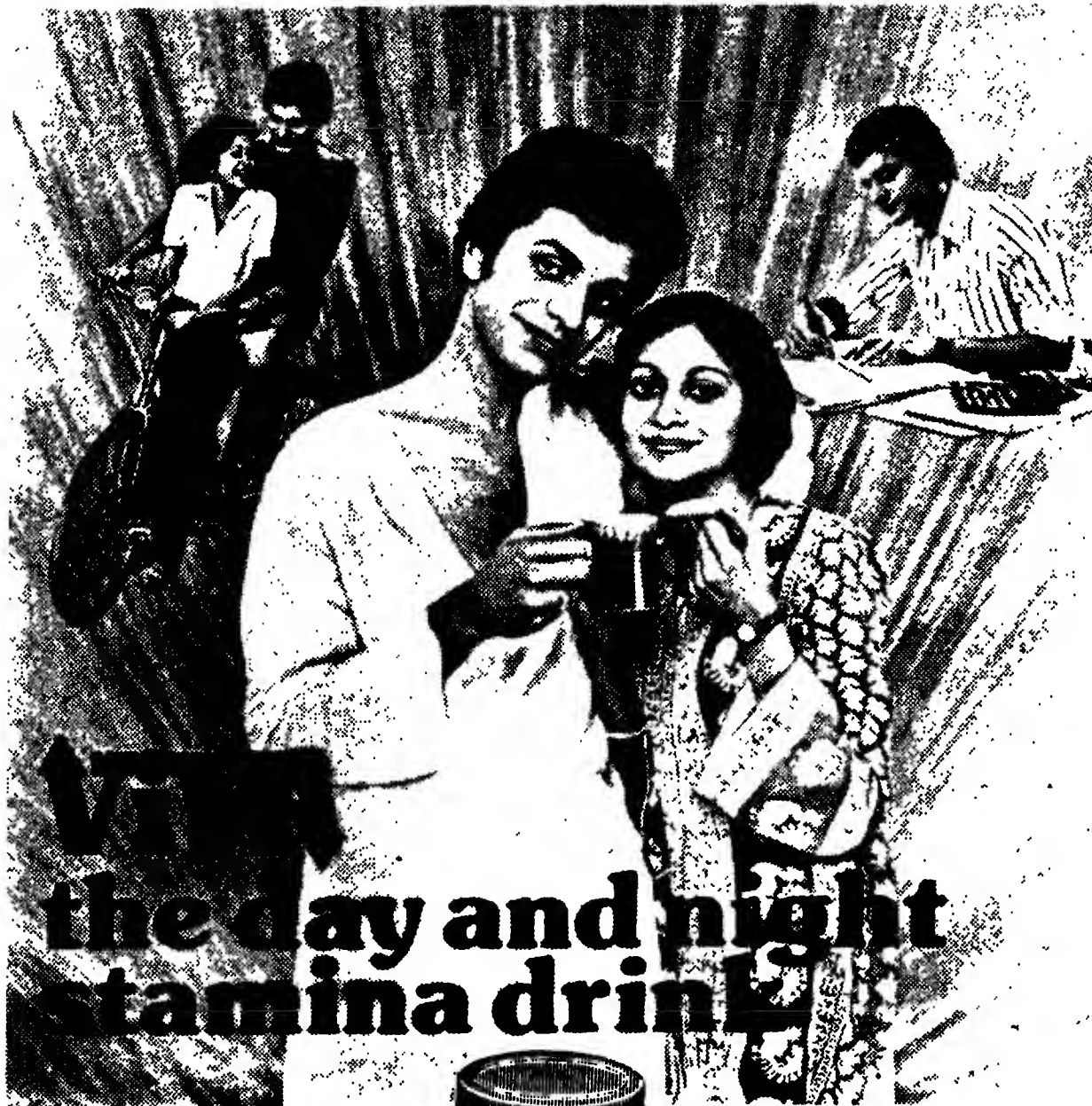
Mr A. K. Roy, the lone non-Janata MP, in the dissolved Lok Sabha from Bihar and UP is in a privileged position because two of the six Assembly segments of the Dhanbad Lok Sabha constituency are being represented by his lieutenants. They are Mr Anand Mahto (Sindri) and Mr Kripa Shankar Chatterjee (Nirsa). Several factors will help him get an upper hand. He has a vast volunteers' machinery and his support to the Jharkhand movement will certainly bring him adivasi votes.

A distinction is now being made by the public between Mr A. K. Roy, who has an honest and frugal image, and his followers. In fact, it is felt that he has lost contact with his lieutenants. His men have recently been seen moving about on motorbikes and yet the BCKU is not exactly a wealthy organisation. Contractors supplying collieries in which the BCKU is strong were allegedly asked to give motorbikes to the union office bearers. Two highups in Mr Roy's BCKU have reportedly joined the good old racket of making money illegally by selling delivery orders of coal.

Mr A. K. Roy has had conflicts with the law on several occasions. No case, however, has been registered against him after he became an MP. Since that time the police have requested the courts to ask him to restrain himself. An engineer by profession he is an individualistic man who lives simply and describes himself as a political thinker. Those who have heard his speeches say that he can certainly arouse passions. His speeches touch on something close to the hearts of the villagers and locals: their love for their land.

Though Mr A. K. Roy may claim 70 per cent of the votes of the villagers, urban voters will pose a threat to him. With the odds piling up against his BCKU, in the last two-and-a-half years, he should not expect more than two per cent urban votes. The common cause of the Janata, the Congress and the Congress (I) is to defeat Mr Roy but it is unlikely that they will share his traditional adivasi and village votes.

A CORRESPONDENT



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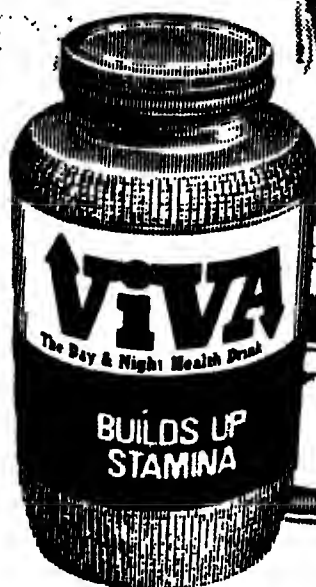
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Janata will reap harvest

IN Jamshedpur, the *Sampradaya* Virodhi Committee is a spent force and except newcomers to the city, nobody even notices the large boardings which plead for communal harmony. Two communal riots earlier this year have left their ugly rashes on the skin of this steel city. These rashes have again surfaced with the approaching elections to the Lok Sabha. The blame for this ugly criminal relapse must be shared by all the 21 candidates who are in the fray, especially the Janata and the Congress (I) candidates, who invariably bring up communal issues at election meetings. The result: the opinion of the voter in the Jamshedpur Lok Sabha constituency will be influenced by religious rather than ideological considerations. Meanwhile, the administration is trying its level best to maintain communal peace with the help of 13 companies of the Central Reserve Police and seven companies of the Border Security Force.

The Jamshedpur Lok Sabha constituency is composed of six Assembly constituencies — Jamshedpur East, Jamshedpur West, Patamada, Jugsalai, Ghatsila and Bagrahghora. Altogether 834 polling booths have been set up in the constituency. The Congress (I) has fielded Mr V. G. Gopal, and the Janata Party has Mr Rudra Pratap Sarangi, who belongs to the erstwhile Jana Sangh. The CPI has fielded Mr Tika Ram Manjhi and the Jharkhand Party is represented by Mr Chote Ram Manjhi. The Lok Dal candidate is Mr Karnath Jaiswal. The constituency has seven lakh voters, with the Muslims forming a seventh of it.

The industrial labour force constitutes, perhaps, the most important and decisive segment of the constituency's electorate. The organised industrial sector employs 75,000 workers, contractors' labour accounts for 75,000 workers and small scale industries employ another 30,000 workers. The smaller mining and processing industries on the fringes of Jamshedpur account for 15,000 workers. Among the trade unions the most powerful is the INTUC which controls five of the organised industrial concerns—Tisco, Telco, Tinplate, Indian Steel and Wire Products and Indian Tube. The three remaining concerns, Indian Cable, Tata Robins-Fraser (TRF) and the Jamshedpur Engineering and Machine Manufacturing Company (JEMCO) are controlled by independent trade unions which are not directly affiliated to any political Party. The INTUC union at Tisco is headed by the Congress (I) candidate, Mr V. G. Gopal, while Mr Gopeshwar Lal Das is the leader of the remaining four. Mr Michael John, the legendary trade unionist who died in 1977 and who has become a case history at the Xavierian Labour Rela-

tions Institute, had the distinction of having controlled the workers' unions of all the eight industrial concerns in Jamshedpur.

Intra-Party differences are the main handicap of the Congress (I). I visited Mr V. G. Gopal's residence on December 20 which also happened to be his birthday. His supporters were in a festive mood and a local band added more to the gaiety than the cause of music. He cut the birthday cake surrounded by more than 25 women who sang: "Happy birthday to uncle. May the lord bless uncle". He also delivered a short speech to his exclusive audience under the shamiana. Reportedly, Mr Gopeshwar Lal was Mrs Gandhi's first choice for this constituency but the former was reluctant to leave trade unionism. Mr Kedar Pandey wanted Mr Bineshwar Dubey, Binar's INTUC president, to contest this seat but ultimately Mr Gopal got the Party ticket. As a trade union leader, Mr Gopal is not lacking in material resources but an indifferent and even hostile Party cadre could bring about his undoing. The Congress (I)'s slogan in Jamshedpur is: *'Hindu Muslim Sikh Isai, Sab hi party Congress (I).'* And Mr Gopal's primary and natural objective is to rope in the votes of both the communities. However, the presence of Maulana Qadri by his side may not go down well with the Hindus.

Mr Rudra Pratap Sarangi, the Janata's nominee is the sitting MP from Jamshedpur. Two communal outbreaks during his short term have made him extremely unpopular with the Muslims and no amount of coaxing or reassuring is likely to convince the major section of the minority community. The Administration is keeping an eye on the style and quality of electioneering and the resources of each candidate. A highly-placed bureaucrat told me that, money was being poured into this constituency to defeat a particular candidate. The Government official refused to elaborate but other sources in the city spoke about the rumour currently doing its rounds that Mr Biju Patnaik is probably interested in defeating Mr Sarangi. If the rumour is true, the only possible reason seems to be Mr Sarangi's letter to the then Prime Minister Morarji Desai accusing Mr Biju Patnaik of corruption and Mr Sarangi's offer to resign if Mr Patnaik proved himself innocent. Mr Desai had immediately instituted an enquiry headed by Mr Ghattani.

Communal riots earlier this year have divided the electorate and neither the administration nor the politicians have been successful in creating goodwill among the Hindus and the Muslims. The Congress (I) promises security and peace to the Muslims while the Janata assures

peace to the Hindus. As things stand now, a large section of the Hindus will vote for the Janata. Mr Sarangi has been telling his audiences that "adequate representation" promised to the Muslims by the Congress (I) is a direct threat to the future of Hindus in India. A whispering campaign has been successful in keeping the two communities aloof from each other and sealed all chances of amity.

The Muslims are divided into the Bareilly and the Deoband groups. The Bareilly group is headed by Maulana Qadri and his supporters will vote for the Congress (I). The Deoband group is headed by Hakeem Saheb and will vote for the Janata. The reason they forward is that this will help the Muslims to live harmoniously with the Hindus. The literate urban Muslims are most likely to vote for the CPI. This Party is also expected to get a section of the Adivasi votes, in the rural areas around Jamshedpur, particularly among the landless labourers. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha is also expected to get a share of the Adivasi votes. But it is ultimately the Janata Party which will bag the largest share of the Adivasi votes. The majority of the Adivasis in this area are non-Christians.

Though the Congress (I) appears to be the most organised Party in this constituency and controls the major trade unions, it is difficult to predict its electoral prospects. The allegiance of industrial workers to INTUC may prove misleading because the workers have become Hindus and Muslims first. A trade union leader lamented: "The 1964 riots pushed back the workers' movement by five years and the recent riots could possibly have a longer effect on the solidarity of the workers".

In the first Lok Sabha elections in 1952, the Jamshedpur constituency sent Mani Ghosh of the Congress to Parliament. In 1957, this constituency returned Sanu Charan Godsera, a Jharkhand Party candidate. Dr Mishra of the CPI won in 1962, Seo Chandika of the Congress in 1967 and Swaran Singh of the Congress in 1971 who won by a margin of only 132 votes.

The wedge of communalism has been driven deep into the electorate and a fortnight before the elections, Mr Sarangi appears to be a sure winner because the majority of Hindus are likely to vote for him. Mr Gopal's chances may improve in the coming days and his followers are patiently awaiting Mrs Gandhi's tour of Chotanagpur to boost the Party's prospects. Although a trade unionist first, Mr Gopal may not be very popular with the workers. This was discovered in course of a survey conducted by the students of Jamshedpur's Xavierian Labour Relations Institute. If Mr Gopal wins, he will be the first INTUC office-bearer from Jamshedpur to enter the Lok Sabha though INTUC is 54 years old in this city. Of the other candidates in the fray, only the CPI's Tika Ram Manjhi can put up a respectable performance.

SYED NISAR MEHDI ABDI

A wild wind blows through Chattisgarh

CHATTISGARH, the land of the forts which once stretched from the edge of the Scindia empire of Kalahandi in Orissa but which now is geographically defined as seven districts of Madhya Pradesh, is one of the poorest regions in the country. At the best of times there is just one crop, kharif. This year drought has snatched even this tenuous link with survival. The fields are barren and hardly ever does one see the reassuring sight of a pair of bullocks trudging phlegmatically over dark soil. But images of poverty are strewn all over — limp defeated eyes, children in rags playing with the only toys they have ever known, twigs and stones. And by January and February next year, people will begin to die in Chattisgarh due to starvation. Because, as if the Janata Government had not done enough to alienate the people already, it has also added to its obvious unpopularity by completely neglecting relief work in this area which is just a little smaller than Orissa.

Today the 36 forts do not exist but in their place have risen the forts of the twentieth century — massive factories beside the railway track between Calcutta and Raipur. For instance, near Bhatapara, Mandhar, Tilda and Baikunth, huge towers of cement rise into the uncluttered air. These are the factories of the Birlas or the Government and they look like the isolated forts that once must have equally dominated the lands-

cape. And they perform the same function, too. They are isolated islands meant to serve the ruling classes in return for passing out a bit of employment to the local population just as the old forts must have done.

Today, neglected and impoverished Chattisgarh is rallying to an old cry for separate Statehood. This cry has been taken up by a young brahmachari who is at once a sadhu, a poet and a politician who lost to Shyama Charan Shukla in 1972 as the Jana Sangh candidate but defeated him in 1977 as the Socialist nominee in the Janata list. He comes from the village Jonda in Raipur district but for more than a decade he has lived in Rajim where he has started an ashram. He used to teach Sanskrit there and his early students used to get their train fare from their homes to the ashram and back as an additional benefit for studying there. The saint politician is an MA in both Hindi and Sanskrit. His movements are uncertain. He sleeps wherever night falls—in the nearest home which will have him. His meetings draw huge crowds. He speaks in enchanting Chattisgarh and in the style of Naavha, the folk act of Chattisgarh where performers talk to the audience and entertain them through the night. The young are his ardent supporters and the women in the village adore this handsome 35-year-old brahmachari. When the Janata Government was formed in

1977, after the Assembly elections, he became Minister of State, in charge of Panchayat and Social Welfare. When V. K. Saklecha became Chief Minister replacing his Jana Sangh colleague, Kailash Joshi, he became a Cabinet Minister in charge of Jails. But his Ministerial work was poor, if not non-existent. He hardly ever looked at files. Perhaps the most prominent thing he did was to allow two journalists to meet two condemned prisoners, an evening before they were to hang and then watch the hanging for a story on what a death sentence means.

This man is still in demand at kavi sammelans and hundreds of public functions. The original name, he grew up with nobody remembers. Now they all call him Pawan Diwan which could be roughly translated as 'the wild wind'. On December 7, Pawan Diwan went to the Raipur collectorate to file his nomination. The auspicious time was between 1 pm and 2-06 pm and he reached during that time. Behind him were about 500 people chanting "Pawan nahin hai aandhi hai. Chattisgarh ka Gandhi hai" (This is not a wind but a storm. He is the Gandhi of Chattisgarh). Two poems of Pawan Diwan have become more famous than the rest. One of them deals with a girl in his village called Champa. The other was written in 1971 when the Telengana movement was rocking Andhra Pradesh and it went: "Ban jaayega Chattisgarh Telengana" (Chattisgarh will become another Telengana).

Almost a decade after that, Pawan Diwan has resigned from the Ministership of the Janata Party to lead the Prithak Chhattisgarh Party (Separate Chhattisgarh Party). The Party is not recognised by the Election Commission and Diwan has asked to be allotted one of these three free symbols: tiger, elephant or the rising sun. Diwan prefers the tiger. One of the important reasons for the sudden rise in popularity of this movement is the general disgust with the existing political Parties, and the presence of a weak and uncertain Central Government. Bargains are impossible in this atmosphere. People at all levels in Chattisgarh also seem to be responsive to this idea of a separate State. The advocates of Raipur, for instance, are agitating for a High Court in Raipur. They are holding relay hunger strikes at Shastri Chowk where the collectorate and the Sessions Court are. The nearest High Court is at Jabalpur, nearly 300 km away and the journey is expensive for poor people.

Every Party, with the sole exception of the Congress, has publicly supported the demand for a separate State. V. C. Shukla, easily the dominant politician of the region, said on December 8 that under Mrs Gandhi small States like Mizoram were created which showed that his Party was sympathetic to the demand for a small State. P. L. Kaushik the present I and B Minister

Pawan Diwan



who is contesting from Mahasamund (the other important candidates in this highly interesting contest will be V. C. Shukla, who is now the frontrunner and Brijlal Varma, the Janata Cabinet Minister) has encouraged the Chaudhury to reiterate his promise of breaking up large States like UP, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. And Brijlal Varma has publicly supported Statehood for Chattisgarh. But the Janata Party's contradictions were once again evident even as Brijlal Varma was supporting this demand in his efforts to survive politically. On December 8 at a public meeting in Durg, Morari Desai publicly condemned those demanding smaller States. Brijlal Varma could not have been a happy man after the ex-Prime Minister's campaign to make friends and influence people in Chattisgarh.

If the Congress has not supported this demand it is for a good reason. Shyama Charan Shukla, elder brother of V. C. Shukla, heads the Party here and his enmity with Pawan Diwan extending to two elections (1972 and 1977) is personal. In fact, S. C. Shukla was being persuaded by his followers to contest from Raipur but he finally decided not to contest at all. He told me on December 8 that his decision depended on whether he

wanted to join national politics or remain at the State level. His preference was clearly for the State from where he wanted to finish the Jana Sangh and the RSS. In any case, the only person who could defeat Pawan Diwan in Raipur is S. C. Shukla. The Shukla brothers dominate the politics of the region and their personal popularity is tremendous. Two years out of power for both the brothers has only enhanced their personal reputations. As an autorickshaw driver put it: "These two brothers have done record work for Raipur". The Congress (I) candidate, Gorelal Shukla (no relation of the Shukla brothers) could win only in case of an exceptional Indira wave of which there are no signs at the moment, though, of course, anything can happen by January 6 when Chattisgarh goes to the polls. He is considered a weak nominee. His sole virtue seems to be that he is a Chattisgarh brahmin as is Pawan Diwan. He is a retired IAS officer but without a distinguished record. The Janata candidate here, Deoras Surana, whose sole claim to fame seems to be that he contested unsuccessfully for the Assembly in the 1967 polls on the Jana Sangh ticket should be a poor third.

M. J. AKBAR

from the rich landlord's or politician's grip. Promises served with rhetoric around election time seems to satisfy them. This Mrs Gandhi can do much better than others.

Jayapal Reddy, however, refuses to grant that history will repeat itself again in Medak. He points hopefully to the 26 per cent valid votes polled by the Janata in the 1977 Lok Sabha election and to the local issues on which the sleepy electorate can be roused. There is a demand to make Medak the district headquarters. The low agricultural wages in the area is another issue. There is some evidence that these issues may become important in Medak. But will these pose a problem of Mrs Gandhi? It is difficult to predict. A small farmer from Rajampalli this correspondent spoke to, neatly summed up the mood of the electorate: "They will think about the inequities of existence but vote for Indira". He had travelled quite a few miles with a contingent of small kisans to see and hear the kisan leader, Charan Singh. On the issue of Emergency too, his comment was revealing: "Our worst Emergency, is the dry sky".

There are certain factors at Medak which may make the contest a one-sided affair. The youth which campaigned for Janata with zest in the previous elections seem to have lost the enthusiasm. "The streets were full of young men in the last elections", said a wistful Medakian. Besides, a low turnout will certainly go in favour of Mrs Gandhi. She will have a larger number of committed votes on her side.

Christian and Muslim votes total up to a bare 11 per cent in the Medak constituency. As for the harijan votes, it is difficult to say how many of them will impulsively cross over to Jagjivan Ram. The harijans of Andhra Pradesh seem to be content with slogans on State Corporation buses which proclaim; "Untouchability is inhuman".

It is unlikely that Mrs Gandhi will face a tough contest. When this correspondent went round Medak when Charan Singh was visiting this constituency he saw evidence of the ruling Party and the electorate taking the results of the January elections for granted. The slogans on the walls were those of previous elections and the fiercest of them were about the local college elections held a few months ago. The usual paraphernalia of an imminent election — jeeps, flags, crowds, crowded Party offices, Party workers — were missing. It is unlikely that a backward electorate with 17.5 per cent literacy rate will be swayed in a last minute propaganda blast. And the impact of the Lok Dal candidate, Keshav Rao Jadhav's, withdrawal may be lost on the electorate.

Even the independent candidates who have converged on Medak seem to have been drawn to the constituency by the prospect of opposing Mrs Gandhi.

N. RAJAGOPALAN

Andhra Pradesh

Medak : Bright prospects for Mrs Gandhi

IN Medak, at about 10 a.m. on December 18, ten thousand men and women with that easy and unhurried mien of rural India, were awaiting the arrival of Charan Singh at Medak town. And that was all the crowd the Lok Dal received during his tour. As Charan Singh arrived and started campaigning, the Lok Dal candidate from Medak constituency, Keshav Rao Jadhav, was looking uncertain. The rest of the voting population of over seven lakhs of the constituency seemed to be going peacefully about its daily business. Jadhav's misery has since been ended, the Lok Dal having become wise enough to pull the Hyderabad professor out of the fight.

Medak and Mrs Gandhi seem made for each other. When you mention this to the Janata candidate, Jayapal Reddy, he screws up his face and advises you not to "take the people for granted or for fools". The sprawling parliamentary constituency of Medak, made up of 1,200 villages and a few small industrial pockets, has consistently voted for the Congress since 1957. And with every

election, the Congress member from Medak has increased his tally of polled votes. And none of them were outstanding.

The usual small complement of big landlords—Reddys and Raos—dominate this constituency. Their expertise in getting in the votes cannot be doubted. The figures of the past prove this. Add this to a docile population, the fringe benefits of new jobs from industries spreading into Medak from Hyderabad and the Congress bid to start schemes aimed at tackling backwardness in the last two decades, you get an idea of why Congress loyalties run deep in Medak. Parts of Medak even now remain declared backward. The constituency's main problem is irrigation water in spite of the Manjira scheme. Some paddy and sugarcane is produced in the district which feeds the local Khandasari units. The Congress has taken the credit for all these and more. But the district's per capita income still lags behind the State and national average. The poorer sections, on the other hand, appear too timid to participate in political processes that may deliver them

Jat support will boomerang on Lok Dal

RAJASTHAN evokes memories of rajas and maharajas with all their splendour and regalia. Three weeks before the State goes to the polls a strange silence greets visitors to Rajasthan. Does peace portend something unexpected? This is Rajasthan's seventh Lok Sabha election. In the past the campaigning was done by well-dressed former rulers and affluent company executives who are conspicuous by their absence this time. The abolition of the jagirdari system made most of them turn to the Congress in the early Fifties and Sixties but the people who benefited from the distribution of land worked against the Congress. Rajasthan has always been a non-Congress State, barring 1957. The Congress could never get a clear majority in the Assembly. Even in 1971, when the Indira wave swept the country the non-Congress candidates retained eight of their seats in Rajasthan.

Rajasthan is said to have the best Janata administered Government in spite of a Chief Minister who works

unsystematically. As early as October '77 some Janata promises such as Antyodaya were implemented. Antyodaya seems to have had some impact on the electorate in the rural areas. There has been quick disposal of cases pending in courts and with officials for years which has also had its impact. Prices went down in the two years of Janata rule and there were no shortages. Things took a sudden turn for the worse after July 1979 and the question is whether the illiterate rural voter will take the Janata State Government to task by defeating the Janata candidates. Today, there is no wave—neither an Indira wave nor a Janata wave. The voter will have to be more decisive. The Congress-Lok Dal alliance is in a shambles and where an alliance exists it will be useless. The CPI candidate, H. K. Vyas, in Ajmer is the lone Alliance candidate and he will have to face the Congress (I) and Janata forces.

The Lok Dal itself is in a mess. The Central leadership has selected

mostly Jat candidates. Jat pockets are of course there but their votes will not decide the future of any candidate in any of the constituencies. This has angered non-Jat voters who will now turn to other candidates. In the urban areas which have sizable Janata voters people are annoyed because of the shortages and price rise. The Congress(I)'s promises of a stable, strong and clean Government have had hardly any impact on the electorate so far. The prospect of Babuji becoming Prime Minister seems to have fired the imagination of the scheduled castes who constitute 16.04 per cent of the votes. There is a lack of confidence in the Congress(I) and Lok Dal camps—the former for the fact that it is starting from scratch and the latter for want of enthusiasm in rural areas for Charan Singh's campaign against the cities. The shortage of diesel is not a big factor in Rajasthan's rural areas. The dissatisfaction on the selection of Lok Dal candidate burst into the open when the Socialist veteran from Kota, Hiralal Jain, returned the ticket given to him in protest against the manner of distribution of tickets to others. The Lok Dal has thus earned, in the bargain, a nickname—"Jatdal".

There is an apprehension, according to leaders, that Lok Dal candidates may walk out of the Party.

A. N. PRABHU

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Delhi

No Party will sweep the polls this time

PARLIAMENTARY elections in Delhi, the country's capital, have traditionally been a one-sided affair. In 1962, the Congress swept all the seven seats. In 1967 it was the turn of the Jana Sangh who clinched all except one. In 1971, the Indira wave routed all Opposition Parties and in 1977, the voters swung away from the Congress towards the newly formed Janata Party, giving them all seven seats.

But in only two of the seven Delhi constituencies, does there seem to be some signs of one Party being ahead of the others. These two are the predominantly rural Outer Delhi constituency which seems to be in the pocket of the Lok Dal and, the East Delhi constituency in which the Congress (I)'s old war horse, H. K. L. Bhagat, has a distinctive edge over his other political opponents.

If the Outer Delhi constituency is any indication of the mood of all other rural constituencies in the country, Prime Minister Charan Singh should romp home in the elections with a thumping majority. "We have met and decided that Charan Singh is the only honest politician in the country today. We will vote for him, or for any other man or even a lump of earth he sends to us as a candidate", says 80-year-old Chowdhury Chunni Lal who was elected head of the Sarva Kshap, consisting of 360 villages on the outskirts of Delhi, when he was only 12.

And the man who is contesting the elections on the Lok Dal ticket from Outer Delhi is anything but a lump of earth. He is Chowdhury Brahm Prakash, former Chief Minister of Delhi State and the present Union Minister of Agriculture. Brahm Prakash is a legend in the capital's election history. An old Congressman, he won from Outer Delhi in 1962 and repeated his performance in 1967 even when the Jana Sangh routed the Congress in all the other seats in Delhi. In 1971, he declined to stand for elections although Mrs Gandhi herself repeatedly requested him to do so, because he had a tiff with the Congress hierarchy. In 1977, Brahm Prakash was back again in the election fray, this time on the Janata ticket. He won with a resounding majority.

With the new thrust towards consolidation of the backward castes under the Lok Dal banner, Brahm Prakash has no dearth of supporters in the constituency which has over 150,000 backward castes voters. "We shall run from village to village to campaign for Chowdhury Saab and he shall win", says Chunni Lal with complete confidence.

For Brahm Prakash, however, the battle is not completely won largely because of the fact that the harijan community in the constituency has over 200,000 votes and none of these are likely to go to Brahm Prakash. The harijan vote is likely to be split between the Janata Party and Congress (I) and this is bound to help Brahm Prakash. While Mrs Gandhi has the solid support of the balmiki harijan, Jagjivan Ram has an equal support of the jatav vote. Brahm Prakash will also have to strive hard for getting a large chunk of the rest of the floating vote in the 600,000 strong constituency.

THE election scene in the East Delhi constituency is heavily underlined by the irony of ups and downs in Indian politics of the past few years. With nearly 40 per cent of its electorate concentrated in the resettlement colonies, the East Delhi constituency is a constant reminder of what the Emergency did as well as what the Janata Party did not do.

The grotesque creation of the unholy union between Mr Sanjay Gandhi's desire to "teach the rabble a lesson" and the overriding ambitions of the DDA Vice-Chairman Jagmohan, Delhi's colonies represent more than anything else the trauma of the Emergency. The uprooted people thrown into the dungheap in the name of resettlement showed their resentment with the Emergency regime quite decisively in the March 1977 elections when they voted the Janata candidate, Kishore Lal, a non-entity, to victory by the largest margin ever in the capital's electoral history routing the Congress candidate, H. K. L. Bhagat, in spite of his long association with the constituency.

And yet after only two and a half years, Mr Bhagat is well poised to take revenge over his Janata rival who is the same Kishore Lal, now shrunk greatly in size. For this dramatic reversal of political fortunes, the Janata Party can only blame itself. The complete apathy of the Janata Government towards the problems of the people in the resettlement colonies has considerably alienated them from the Party they had voted for so strongly in the last elections.

If the election scene in East Delhi is full of irony, what is seen at the Chandni Chowk constituency is a farce. Memories of bullets and bulldozers intermingle with talk of the RSS's plans to 'Indianise' Muslims in the lanes and by-lanes of Turkman Gate and Jama Masjid. Pre-

siding over this bundle of contradictions is the portly figure of Abdullah Bukhari, Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid — a man who personifies the absurd in the constituency.

"Bad days have come upon us janab", says a hoary old Turkman Gate shopkeeper as he shakes his head disapprovingly at the election scene in the area. When the Imam gave a call to resist the police, we followed his instructions. Now, Imam Sahab says that Mrs. Gandhi is the saviour of Muslims. Those days when the Janata Party came to us and said 'give us your vote,' it was a vote for every Muslim who died in the Turkman Gate firing. We gave our votes willingly. Now the same Janata Party talks about Muslims being anti-national. Tell me, who will we consider our friends and who will we consider our enemies?" the old man asked.

The Imam is not sure who his enemies or friends are. His announcement declaring his support to Mrs. Gandhi has proved to be unfortunate to him and Mrs Gandhi. Till his announcement, the mounting anger in Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate against the Janata Government for its apathy towards the Muslims of the walled city, as well as the increasing RSS dominance over the Janata Party, had pushed the people despite the traumatic memories of the Emergency, towards Mrs Gandhi. But along with the growing anger with the Janata Government has come an increasing loss of faith in the Imam who had promised them paradise under the Janata rule. The enemies of the Imam have grown in number over the last two years and his support to Mrs Gandhi has been seen as the height of opportunism for a priest who had sworn by Allah that Mrs Gandhi was the "devil incarnate".

The Imam was heckled on one of his Friday speech at the Masjid and a pamphlet circulated accusing him of, among other things, "selling the whole Muslim community down the drain", caused him to flee the area for fear that he might be physically attacked.

Since then, the Imam has kept a low profile on the election scene, making vague pronouncements about giving "conditional support to Mrs. Gandhi". But it is a common feeling among Muslims in the area that the Imam is only a liability to the former Prime Minister. Mrs Gandhi herself is keenly aware of the unpopularity of the Imam and the dim chances of getting a sizable section of the Muslim vote. This has led her to put up a Hindu candidate, Bhiku Ram Jain, in an attempt to woo the Hindu voter in the constituency. The Hindu voters who constitute more than half of the constituency, however, have solid sympathy for the RSS and in spite of the Janata candidate being a Muslim is likely to vote for him. In fact, Sikander Bakht, the Janata candidate, is a Muslim who largely depends on the Hindu vote to win

During the elections. While there is some support to Bakht mainly from the kasal (butcher) section of the Muslims, he is finding it difficult to play down his associations with the RSS — a label which is being exploited fully by his opponents.

The one who right now seems to be the most active and dominant, among the Muslims of the constituency, is Shujadullah Khan, the Muslim League candidate who is supported by the Lok Dal. There is a strong support for Khan particularly among the Muslim youth who in the absence of any senior leader of the Muslims in the area, are very much in the foreground. Khan is unlikely, however, to get any support from the Hindu voters in the constituency.

The other candidate in the fray is Mrs. Subhadra Joshi of the Congress who was going to be the joint candidate of the Lok Dal-Congress alliance before the two partners fell out over seat distribution. While Mrs Joshi has generally a good reputation among both Muslims and Hindus in the constituency, she has neither the organisation nor the drive to pose any really serious challenge. Of all the candidates, it is Bakht who probably stands the best chance of winning because of the Hindu support.

THE election focus, in the neighbouring constituency, is mainly on the battle between two strongmen of the Emergency's Youth Congress — Lalit Maken of the Congress and Jagdish Tytler of the Congress(I). Maken had been the Delhi Youth Congress chief in the first half of the Emergency but was soon pushed out of Sanjay Gandhi's favour by another rising star, Jagdish Tytler. The battle between the two for favours of mother and son continued till April this year when Maken left the Congress(I) in a pique after Devaraj Urs quit the Party.

Both Tytler and Maken have started hectic campaigning in the constituency. Maken is perhaps the only Congress candidate in the capital who has some organisation but that is about all that he has. His youth and former association with the Emergency regime are not likely to win him much sympathy among the electorate which is heavily dominated by the trading class. Even less popular is the image of Tytler who was one of the main hit men of the Sanjay brigade in the capital during the latter and more terrible half of the 19 months. Tytler, however, has swung in all his Youth Congress (I) volunteers and it is reported that his mentor Sanjay Gandhi has assured him all the funds he needs.

While the overt election battle is being fought between the noisy supporters of the two youth leaders, the Janata candidate Kanwarlal Gupta, an old Jana Sanghi and winner from the constituency in the last elections is trying hard to cash in on the old sympathies between the bania and the RSS for votes from the traders. Gupta, however may find it difficult to get any votes from the

harijan and Muslim voters. These may go in a large way to the other Gupta in the fray — Prem Sagar Gupta of the Communist Party of India who is trying his luck in the Parliamentary elections for the first time.

The election results in the two urban constituencies of New Delhi and South Delhi might indicate whether the Indira wave is a reality or a myth. Both the candidates of Mrs Gandhi—Charanjit Singh and C. M. Stephen — have had little or no mass base in the capital. Charanjit Singh is a soft-drinks magnate who came into the limelight during the Emergency when he was very generous with his funds to the Youth Congress but was routed in the March 1977 elections by the Jana Sangh strongman V. K. Malhotra. For Stephen, it is the first time he is venturing to fight from the capital and his lack of Hindi is rather pronounced in the few elections meetings he has so far held in the capital.

Stephen's photograph on election posters is generally accompanied by one of Mrs Gandhi's and like the majority of her candidates, Stephen is almost completely dependent on her charisma to deliver him the votes. Pitted against him is Atal Behari Vajpayee, one of the few Jana Sangh leaders who has always had great popular support in the capital. A defeat for Vajpayee from New Delhi would, perhaps, be the worst blow to the prestige of the former Jana Sangh constituent in the Janata.

The other major candidates in the two constituencies are Mr Rajinder Puri of the Lok Dal in New Delhi and Shashi Bhusan of the Congress in South Delhi. Puri, a prolific journalist and cartoonist turned politician, may get some votes from the intelligentsia but his overall performance could well be the funniest cartoon the Lok Dal General Secretary has ever drawn. Shashi Bhusan

who had contested on the ticket of Mrs Gandhi's Congress in March 1977 and was miserably defeated has now come back to South Delhi from where he won in 1971 riding high on the Indira wave. His lack of organisation and even a minor political image, however, make his chances of victory extremely remote. The elections in the two constituencies will be interesting from the angle of the mood of the white-collar workers who predominate and are probably the most politically articulate section of the country's electorate.

The remaining constituency of Karol Bagh is a reserved one, and the two contenders for the harijan vote in the country today — Babu Jagjivan Ram and Mrs Indira Gandhi — are far more important in the minds of the electorate there than the respective candidates. The Janata candidate, Shive Narain Sarsuniya, however, is not really Babuji's man. It was one of the ironies of caste politics in India when in March 1977, Babuji's chief harijan protege in the capital, T. Sohan Lal, refused to leave the Congress with him. And Jagjivan Ram was forced to support Sarsuniya who actually belonged to the Jana Sangh. Like all other Janata candidates from Delhi, Sarsuniya went with a resounding majority in the '77 elections. Now he faces Dharam Dass Shastri of the Congress(I) who is also a leader of the Opposition in the Metropolitan Council. Shastri has in the last two years kept in constant touch with the harijans and has probably a better rapport with them than Sarsuniya. But this is counter-balanced by the fact that some areas of the constituency like Patel Nagar and Rajinder Nagar, which are mainly former refugee colonies are strongholds of the erstwhile Jana Sangh.

AJOY BOSE

Kerala

Left unity on trial

THE test of the Left will be in Kerala. After crossing many hurdles Left unity has been achieved in Kerala but in the process the Left, particularly the CPI(M) and the CPI, have lost much of their credibility. It is now clear that for a handful of seats they too do not hesitate to dump overboard principles or policy. But the question is, whether the forming of the larger "Left and democratic front" will help the Left Parties in getting greater representation both in the Assembly and the Parliament.

The Left in general maintains that the new alignment of forces will serve that purpose. Kerala, though one of the most literate States in the country, is not free from age-old pulls of caste and religion. Other-

wise, how can one explain the authority of the church in general and Muslim chauvinism in particular. Muslims and Christians each account for 20 per cent of the population. One easy explanation is that the church in Kerala is a living one as it has entered life through community services which ranges from bank guarantees for purchase of fishing nets to setting up of small business enterprises. Similarly, the influx of Gulf money has benefited the Muslims more than any other community in the State. The industrial development that has taken place in Kerala has been through the strait-jacket of closed community relations. That is why one finds a Syrian Catholic bank, a Nair bank or a Muslim bank. The process extends to other fields.

Another important factor in Kerala's growth is that for a long time before Independence Government jobs and other official benefits were limited mostly to the Nambudiri brahmins and the Nairs. In fact, the State army in the princely days was known as the Nair army as no non-Nair was eligible to join it. The Muslim or the Christian movement started only to fight that. Though now the situation has changed totally, the religious Parties continue to exist and hold sway over the people. Kerala saw the country's first communist Government in 1957 but it had to face the combined pressure exerted by the church and the Nair Services Society. Incidentally, the National Democratic Party of the Nairs is an off-shoot of the Service Society. On the one hand, the undivided CPI concentrated from the very beginning on the backward community of Ezhavas and in the present CPI(M) hierarchy, the Ezhavas are an important factor. Despite all these pulls and pressures among the different communities, Kerala has seen no animosity among communities. That perhaps speaks of the good sense of the people.

The CPI(M)'s opening gambit was the induction of the CPI in its fold last September. The Congress led by Mr. Antony came over to join them only in November. That has, however, polarised the political set-up in Kerala. The Congress(I) for its survival has now to depend on the Muslim League and the Joseph faction of the Kerala Congress which is known as a Christian Party. Of course, the CPI(M) front has the Mani faction of the Kerala Congress. But that is an exception and not the rule. The imponderable in the Kerala elections is that there are 17 lakhs of new voters and one can only guess which way they will vote. Secondly, there have been splits in the Muslim League, the Congress and the Kerala Congress. The basic reason for the existence of the Congress has been anti-communism. Now that it is in the same front with the CPI(M), a section of its old guard would have no choice but to walk over to the Congress(I). Thirdly, the Catholic bishops have come out openly against the Marxists. The bishops, however, have kept quiet about the RSS members in the Janata Party. The church is very much involved in the day-to-day life of the poor Christians in the coastal belt. Archbishop Benedict has openly questioned the Marxists' contention. Such a stand would no doubt lead to a shift among the Kerala Congress supporters despite Mr. Maui being in the Marxist front. Finally, the removal of Mr. C. H. Mohammed Koya, the first Muslim Chief Minister, has already started heart-searching among educated Muslims. It is the undivided CPI which gave Koya and the Muslim League respectability under Namboodiripad.

TARUN GANGULY

Maharashtra

The Maratha vote is divided

BOMBAY, 1980, election-wise is a completely different scene from 1977 and 1971. During 1977 and 1971 there were waves. The former witnessed the hysteria of the Indira wave and the latter saw the whiplash of Janata popularity, throughout the country and both had their repercussions in Maharashtra. The Janata wave was weaker in Maharashtra, excluding Bombay, but it got the necessary push because of the bitter infighting in the Congress Party between the sugar barons who control the political fortunes of this State. The Janata wave was confined to the urban areas where about 16 million or 31.2 per cent of the population live and where, in Bombay, they captured all the six seats.

In the rural areas the Congress dominated through their various levers of power built up over the years through the resources of the State and the political astuteness of the Maratha stalwarts.

So while the Indira wave in 1971 enabled the Congress to capture 42 of the 44 seats the Janata wave and the Congress infighting reduced the strength of the Congress to 20 seats, giving Janata 18 of the 20 seats it contested and the other Parties like the Peasants and Workers Party got 5 seats and the CPI (M) three. This time there is no wave and unless the situation changes very dramatically it will be an equal fight between the three main Parties; the Janata, Congress(I) and the Congress.

In the 1977 elections the united Congress polled 47.02 per cent of the votes as against the Janata's 31.39 per cent. Today while the Janata is intact, as the Lok Dal has not been able to make any headway in the State, the Congress is divided with the two halves led by Mr Y. B. Chavan and Mr Vasantdada Patil being almost equal in strength. The main outcome of this division of the Party is that for the first time the Marathas who control power in this state are today in both the Congress Parties and the Janata. In 1977 the Marathas fought each other covertly, sabotaging each others elections and contributing to the Janata victory. This time they are fighting each other openly with the resources of the various institutions that are used as power levers available to both sides.

The most outstanding instance of Maratha fighting Maratha is in Satara where Mr Y. B. Chavan (Congress) is fighting Mrs. Shalini Patil of the Congress (I) and wife of Mr Vasantdada Patil. In Baramati, the hometown of Chief Minister Pawar, Mr Sambajirao Kakade (Janata) is pitted against Mr S. B. Patil the Congress(I) and in Karad Mr Y. J. Mohite

who belongs to the family of 99 (known as the blue blooded Marathas) is fighting Mr Vilas Patil who also has this blue blood running through his veins.

In these circumstances, it will be the individual merit of the candidate and the merit of the Party that will count. In Bombay, for instance, the Janata seems to have an edge over its rivals in at least three of the six seats, its candidates being Rattansingh Rajda, Mr Ram Jethmalani and Mr B. C. Kamble. It is felt that Mr Subramaniam Swamy, the Janata candidate from North East Bombay has an equal chance of winning because of the two rebel Congress (I) candidates. One of them, Dr Datta Samant, being an outstanding independent candidate. If Dr Samant is able to work up a successful campaign then Dr Swamy's chances are dicey because the former has a sizeable following in the constituency which has workers from the organised and unorganised sector that owe allegiance to him.

In western Maharashtra and southern Maharashtra it's a toss between the Parties where there are 23 seats. In Vidarbha where there are 11 parliamentary seats, the Congress (I) has an overriding position. In Marathwada the scales could be tilted dangerously because of the Dalit uprising and the position after the successful long march for the renaming of the Marathwada University after Dr. Ambedkar.

The developing position in Marathwada where there are eight seats, is a pointer to the fact that for the first time the scheduled caste votes, as also the Muslim votes, are divided. While in Aurangabad city the Marathas dominate the constituency in the rest of the districts it's the scheduled castes that are in the majority. If these votes are divided it will be the Parties that can attract most of the votes that will be able to raise their tally of seats.

Though the Janata Party's record has not been all that bright in the State as a member of the Progressive Democratic Front ministry, the fact remains that the "minorities and Muslims" who are traditionally Mrs Gandhi's vote banks can no longer be taken for granted by her. About the women who form nearly half of the voting population very little can be said at this juncture as their sympathies do seem to tilt in favour of Mrs Gandhi. But since they are able to differentiate between Mrs Gandhi and the candidate that they have to elect, their votes, too, cannot be taken for granted this time.

OLGA TELLIS

'Why is Urs's symbol not the palm?'

THE single biggest issue dominating the Karnataka elections is whether Devaraj Urs will be able to prove his independence of Mrs Indira Gandhi at the hustings. When the Karnataka Chief Minister revolted against the 'authoritarianism' of Mrs Gandhi in July and formed his break-away Karnataka Congress, the point that remained to be proved was whether he had an identity and credibility of his own before the voters, and they had not previously voted him to power purely as the loyal follower of Indiramma.

A tour of Karnataka barely ten days before the polling showed that this was still the single biggest problem facing the Congress(U) workers. The significant reality was that their campaign had started very late. A message that should have been reached to every nook and corner of the State months before was only beginning to be broadcast. The reason they gave for this was the confusion over Party identity and election strategy that they had faced right up to the last moment. First there was the Karnataka Congress, then the strange interregnum from September when Mr Urs was the Congress President while his Party still had not merged. Then came the question of a possible alliance with the State Janata in which Mr Urs had some hopes. Mr Urs's move fell through because of the total rejection of the idea by the local cadre and the State level leaders of the

Janata. Their antagonism to Urs stemmed from the strongarm treatment his Partymen had meted out to them at the grass-roots level over the years.

While the Congress(U) has the most to lose in a late start of the campaign, this was by no means limited to that Party. But for certain key constituencies there was a singular lack of election fever in the State even around Christmas. While driving through large tracts of semi-urban and rural areas, a group of us journalists started a 'spot-the-poster' competition, so few indeed were the outward signs of electioneering. The most commonly given excuse for this was paucity of funds though the two Congresses have no such real problem and the Janata isn't terribly worse off either. A good reason for the late start of the campaign and the general apathy is the disgust of the ordinary voter with the present state of politics, made even more unpalatable in Karnataka by large-scale defections in the State Assembly. It should not, therefore, come as a surprise that most people expect a lower turnout this time. On the positive side is the realisation by all campaign managers of the total familiarity of even rural voters with the finer nuances of partisan politics. Every other rural household seems to possess a transistor radio and the newspaper reading habit is going up. The voter is also keeping his cards very close to his chest indeed, so

that among analysts there is a general reluctance to lay much store by the totting up of probable support through the likely behaviour of traditional voting blocks. In keenly fought constituencies it is freely admitted that the situation is 'fluid'.

Another important fact to emerge from the tour was the phenomenon of a resurgence of the Janata that must have picked itself up in a bare two months. The State Janata is no longer to be dismissed offhand. The current elections are crucially different from '77 in that, from a fairly straight fight between the Congress and the Janata then, it is now a triangular fight between the three major Parties, Congress(U), Congress(I) and the Janata. The Janata in Karnataka is now mainly constituted of the former Congress(O), the Jana Sangh faction being insignificant and the Socialist faction having largely joined the Congress(I) as in Shimoga district. Yeoman service has been rendered to the Party by its old stalwart, Mr S. Nijalingappa. He did an extensive tour of the Hyderabad and Bombay areas of the State, canvassing support for the Party, until about a month back when a heart ailment confined him to bed. Personally of fairly moderate means, he even did a few legs of his tour in public buses when a car was not available, which, considering a leader of his background, must be a record of sorts in India today. The Janata is considered to be the leading contender in four constituencies: Bangalore (south), Kanakpura, Bijapur and Mandya.

The contest in Mandya is interesting because a purely local issue is exercising the voters there, the vast majority of whom are from the former dominant caste of vokkaligas. The area, although mostly in a rain-shadow region is rich through the extensive cultivation of paddy and sugar cane. This is made possible by



Morarji Desai had to beat a hasty retreat when a mob of State Janata Party workers rushed his car and pelted missiles following his refusal to address an unscheduled public meeting at Sathanpur, a small town 75 kms from Bangalore on December 20

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the right bank Visheshwarya canal emerging from the famous Krishna-rajsagar dam which was completed in 1921. The original proposal to have a right bank canal, the Varuna, was never implemented. The Urs Government's decision to dig the canal had led to widespread local agitation in '77, for fear that it would inevitably lead to a cut in the water to the Mandya region. Of course, the Varuna canal would be a boon to the backward areas of Mysore district, but that is a different matter. The other issue that is exercising Mandya constituency is that of defections. Of the seven Janata MLAs of the Parliamentary constituency, four have defected — three to the Congress(U) and one to the Congress(I).

For the Congress(I), the question is not whether there is a new Indra wave now, but whether there is any likelihood of a major chunk of its '77 vote being transferred to the Congress(U). If it can prevent that then its job is done. This is because although there may be some erosion of the Janata vote, a largescale transfer of it to the Congress(U) all over the State is ruled out. That Indira Gandhi is a household name in Karnataka is a fact of life. The irony is that Devaraj Urs's is also so. The dilemma was highlighted by a village-level worker who said: "The villagers say we want to vote for Urs but why is his symbol not the hand?" Added to this is the solid vote bank of the Congress(I) among the Muslims. They constitute about 11 per cent of the electorate. The Muslims, as in most of the country, are solidly with Mrs Gandhi.

This factor hurts the Congress(U) the most in the Mangalore constituency where the Muslim voters number about 120,000. Realising the significance of this the Congress(U) has put up Mr B. A. Mohidin who is a sitting MLA and the head of the Youth Congress(U). He is being challenged by Mr Janardan Pujari of the Congress(I). Pujari is a member of the Billava (toddy tappers) community and the important position held by such a politician (which would have been unlikely a decade ago) is an indication of the sound work done by Devaraj Urs in finding the backwards a place in the sun. Today Pujari would be difficult to defeat without Mohidin getting a substantial share of the Muslim vote which his supporters are confident of but the others discount. Three Assembly segments of the constituency are the home region of the State Congress(I) leader, Mr R. Gundu Rao. Janardan Pujari's victory is, therefore, vital to the Congress(I). A fascinating aspect of the Mangalore constituency is the presence of the sole CPI(M) candidate in the State, Mr Mahabaleswar Bhat. The Party has done substantial work among the plantation labour and the landless peasants in the area. The CPI(M) is generally expected to poll about 75,000 votes, most of which will eat into the Congress(I)'s area of support. The Janata, which polled

40 per cent of the votes cast in '77 has its candidate in Mr K. Sanjeeva Setty, making Mangalore a rare four-corner contest.

The Janata campaigners are making much of the new lease of life the party has got through adopting Mr Jagjivan Ram as its leader. They say that Harijan areas, where previously they have been untouchables, have been opened up to them. The actual measure of harijan support that will be forthcoming for the Janata is hard to gauge. But after the initial claims Janata workers usually admit that the enthusiasm for Jagjivan Ram is restricted to the 'educated' harijans. That does limit the likely electoral fallout, Mrs Gandhi still seems to have a large measure of harijan support notwithstanding Jagjivan Ram and all that the Urs Government has tried to do for them. We stopped off in the middle of our tour at a self-contained little cluster of huts, now a familiar sight all over rural Karnataka and known as 'janata houses', and asked the residents which way the electoral wind blew. Even as they had a roof over their heads on Government land which must make them the envy of their counterparts in say Bihar, the reply was a silent show of the palm much like boy scouts signalling to each other.

The campaign began with Mr Urs thinking that he had solid support in the old Mysore area and was weak in the integrated areas of the former Hyderabad and Bombay regions. At the time of writing the Congress(U) seems to be a front-runner in three constituencies: Bellary, Chikballapur and the reserved constituency of Chamrajnagar where Mr B. Rachiah, Union Minister of State for Industries, is the Congress(U) candidate. The Congress(I) is traditionally strong in the Hyderabad-Karnataka region. In the Bombay-Karnataka region the Congress(U) is not as weak as it had imagined. There is an impressive list of ten constituencies where the Congress(I) is in the lead: Tumkur, Chikmagalur, Mangalore, Chikori, Dharwar (south), Bangalore, Gulbarga, Raichur, Kolar and Koppala.

A measure of the Congress(U)'s uncertainty in the Old Mysore region is the battle royal that is being waged in Mysore constituency. Here the old warrior Tulsidas Dasappa is locked in mortal combat with Rajasekhar Shetty of the Congress(I). The Janata candidate, S. Gurupada Swamy, who speaks chaste LSE prose, is placed third but is not to be treated lightly. The Janata won two of the Assembly segments of the constituency in '78. Tulsidas and Rajasekhar could not be more unlike, the suavity and old-world charm of the former contrasted by the fearsome ruthlessness of the latter. The Congress(U) General Secretary and the former State Industries Minister are both formidable contestants, not the least because, while the defeat of the former will mean a blow to Devaraj Urs in his home district of

Mysore, the latter openly declares that he intends to teach Urs a lesson.

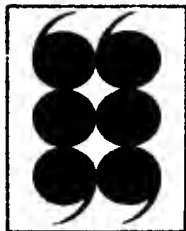
The key constituency for Mrs Gandhi in Karnataka is Udupi, where her former Industries Minister and the present Railway Minister, T. A. Pai faces a young newcomer, Oscar Fernandes. The Janata has in its candidate, V. S. Acharya, a hardy Jana Sangh campaigner who is the veteran of many electoral fights, none of which he has won. A hero of the Emergency, Acharya in '77 lost to Pai polling 121,000 votes. Even if he polls 90,000 votes this time, Pai will have to secure a sizable chunk of his previously polled figure of 224,000. The Billavas, fishermen and Christians constitute the major part of his electorate. The fishermen are solidly with the Congress(I), only the Christians, who are a fairly well-educated lot, may go with Pai. The constituency has been nurtured by Pai for years and he is held in general esteem, Pai's position was well summed up by a Syndicate Bank senior official who should know: "It is because the contender is Mr Pai that the Cong(U) may have a chance".

A significant aspect of the campaign is that where Sanjay Gandhi is an issue in the rest of the country, in Karnataka it is only the Janata that talks about him. The Congress(I) is silent for obvious reasons. But the word has gone out of Balabrooi, the official residence of the Chief Minister: Don't make Sanjay an issue as then M. D. Nataraj may also be turned into one. That certainly would be most embarrassing. For the redoubtable son-in-law of the Chief Minister is very much in the running — from Bangalore (north). He is opposed by the Congress(I) leader Jaffer Sherif. Also in the fray is a Janata candidate, Chennabyre Gowda. There are four rural and four semi-urban Assembly segments. In the area around Bangalore there is a concentration of industrial workers and Nataraj is now the State head of the INTUC among the city Muslim and Tamil slum dwellers. Nataraj may have some hold.

The contribution of Devaraj Urs for the uplift of the harijans, scheduled castes and other backwards of the State is substantial. There has been a recent ordinance (a pre-election stunt, says the Congress-I) which will convert a tenant cultivating up to five acres of dry land or two acres of irrigated land into an owner on payment of a nominal Rs. 100. Now 68 per cent of jobs and seats in colleges are reserved for the backwards. These measures have made their own dent on Kannadiga society and Urs should take the credit. Congress(U) workers challenge you to point out another State where this has been done, if it was actually Mrs Gandhi's doing. But while Mr Urs should have been in Karnataka supervising the carrying of this message to the villages, he was in Delhi or elsewhere working on an alliance that itself is now in a shambles.

SUBIR ROY

Remembering Chikmagalur



JUST before boarding the train for Bangalore I picked up a huge quarrel with an advocate at Hyderabad station. He wanted Indira to win, he thought ends justified means, he was cynically convinced that the masses of our country neither understood nor deserved democracy. In a flash it became clear to me that the strongest factor in favour of Indira at Chikmagalur was the very fact that she was contesting an election there, unrestrained by the processes of law and undeterred by the moral outrage of those who had either suffered or heard about the horrors of the Emergency. Such a person, let us in all honesty admit this, is greatly admired in our country. Nearly as much, although mercifully not by as many, as the saint, the renunciate, like Gandhiji, who gives up everything, including political power, and is content to serve the poor and the downtrodden. Nowhere in the country is the Janata associated with the desire for renouncing political power, and in fact, in Karnataka, Indira's Party had a fairly plausible Robin Hood image as the champion of the poor. The odds were heavily against the Janata, but wasn't George burning himself out like a meteor in Chikmagalur? His brothers Lawrence, and Michael, and his mother Alice, children of Karnataka and victims of the Emergency, were also there, in the thick of the campaign. Wouldn't the suffering and sacrifice of this brave family, typical of thousands of such families all over the country, expose and overwhelm the tyrannical arrogance of Indira Gandhi? Morally yes, but not electorally: but of this later.

On our way to Chikmagalur town we stop at Kadur, where a political meeting is already in progress. Ladi Mohan Nigam insists on speaking in Hindi and subtly plays upon class antagonisms. Two mistakes, I think. E.M.S. Namboodiripad, who has a greater ideological right to exploit class hatred, does not do so. Instead he delivers, in English, a simple, although uninspiring message to the effect that the "correct" thing for the Chikmagalur electorate to do is to defeat Indira Gandhi. What neither Nigam nor Namboodiripad appear to take seriously is that what we are up against is the fact that great masses of people have been utterly seduced by the presence of Indira Gandhi,

by her image as ex-Prime Minister, attractive woman, daughter of Nehru, very possibly related to Mahatma Gandhi, Brahmin, impossible-to-catch benefactor of the poor, persecuted widow, etc., etc. Add to this the subliminal effects of witchcraft and mythologization, and it will become clear why all the moral power and rhetoric of the Janata campaign remained severely handicapped. Moral power is great, but mythological power is stronger. This is sad, but true. Janata is without magic.

Muslims and harijans remind us of the unity of India wherever we go in this country. Muslims nearly everywhere understand and speak beautiful Urdu, and harijans nearly everywhere are without voice, their lives wretched and darkened by centuries of neglect. Many Hindus continue to feel humiliated by the fact that centuries ago Hindu India was militarily conquered by Islam. Even if this sense of humiliation is rational, and it is not, it should be completely cancelled out by the guilt that every Hindu should feel at the fact that harijans to this day remain at the mercy of caste-Hinduism. In Chikmagalur I encountered no Hindu leaders of the Janata Party who were prepared to articulate and spell out the consequences of this moral equation. Atal Behari Vajpayee was sick in Delhi, and Subramaniam Swa-

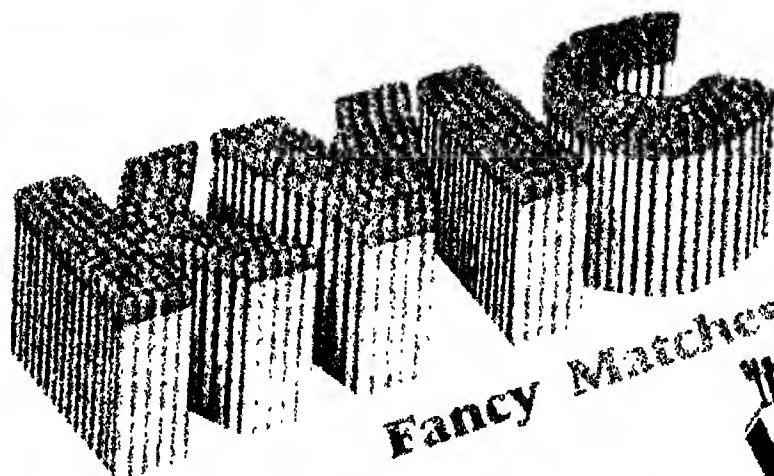
my was nowhere to be seen. I spoke to Muslim men and women and children and drew their attention to the fact that if during the last thirty years Muslims and Hindus have come closer together, this is almost entirely because of the martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhi and the massacre of multitudes of blameless human beings of both communities, and not because of the efforts of so-called secular politicians. Yes, members of the erstwhile Jana Sangh were in office, but they were answerable to all the Hindus of the country, the overwhelming majority of whom were totally opposed to communal politics. Potential communalists were less dangerous in full public view than in hiding. In any case, the brave way forward for Hindus and Muslims was to trust one another and not Indira Gandhi who made them suspect and fear one another. But more important than any argument would have been one single prayer meeting of the kind that Gandhiji used to hold, a reading of passages from both the Gita and the Koran. No such prayer meeting took place in Chikmagalur.

After the lathi-charge on Nandana (daughter of the late Snehalata Reddy, an artist who succumbed to the effects of harsh imprisonment during the Emergency) and the killing of Gayatri (an uninvolved college girl who opened the door of her house to let in students fleeing from violent police) I had the clear thought that we should stop campaigning, because Indira had already suffered satyagraha, fasted, exposed ourselves to danger, but demanded Indira's withdrawal from the electoral contest. Whether or not we would have succeeded, that would have been the correct thing to do. Instead I and others arrogantly and self-deceivably went on haranguing crowds, gree-

Chitrajit Ghosh



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Creative Eye

dily anticipating electoral victory, and how bitterly we have been disappointed!

The defeat at Chikmagalur is not a moral defeat. In all my life I have seen nothing as powerful and spontaneous and victorious in the deepest sense of the word as the women's procession and participatory public meeting which took place in Chikmagalur town the day after Nandana was beaten up. Over a thousand women, girls barely in their teens and even younger, and thousands of others who were drawn to the meeting by the sheer moral power of outraged womanhood, ruthlessly unmasked and demythologized Indira Gandhi. Her ordinariness as a manipulative politician became crystal clear. I wish the Janata campaign had emphasised this aspect of Indira Gandhi more than her supposed criminality. Alas, even glamorous criminality is more seductive than ordinary goodness, which is what, but which is all that Veerendra Patil was able to project. (Of course, we need ordinary goodness in our country and we must beware of glamorous morality. Thousands of people in Chikmagalur were able to see this, and one day all of Karnataka, and all of India, will also see this)

I heard Babu Jagjivan Ram speak at Mudigere. He made no direct appeal to harijans, he gave them no concrete assurances. Was this the way to neutralize the effects of the motivated benevolence of Indira Gandhi and Devaraj Urs? Devaki Jain and I visit harijan villages. She deeply understands that the exploitation of women in India as elsewhere is a singular phenomenon of male hard-heartedness, it has little to do with class or caste. She wants to talk to the women, sit with them, laugh with them. I am impatient and want to tell Devaki that this is no time for

feminist fraternization, this is a battle, we must hit hard, we must win. But I think she is right and I was wrong. The more fundamental and spiritual task of volunteers like us in the campaign was not to try to persuade, but simply to communicate.

Janata announces a mammoth public meeting for the evening of 2nd November, in Chikmagalur town. Suresh Sharma, Vijay Pratap, I, and other volunteers from Delhi spend the day in Muslim mohallas. The men are away at work but we have good talks with the women and children. It is a privilege to be welcomed in so many Muslim homes. We are still hoping for electoral victory, but the craving for victory has gone.

In the evening we go off to Kaimara, a sprawling harijan conglomeration of villages about six miles from Chikmagalur town, enemy territory, practically untouched by Janata. We gather a small crowd and start talking to them. But within minutes a dancing, singing, shouting mob of Indira supporters effectively prevents us from speaking. At the top of my voice I remind the crowd that their true leader is not Indira Gandhi but Dr. Ambedkar, a harijan architect of our Constitution which guarantees freedom of speech to all of us; that by preventing us from speaking to them, Indira Gandhi's harijan supporters were insulting the memory of their own great son and leader. Somebody telephones the police and soon order is restored and we are able to talk again.

We tell our audience that our Constitution, a harijan son's precious gift to the whole nation, was sought to be destroyed by Indira Gandhi, and that similarly she was likely to betray the confidence which they were about to repose in her. We talk about Gandhiji, who, unlike Indira, lived among harijans, but never ar-

rogantly claimed to be their leader. We try and explain to our audience the motivated and necessarily limited character of what Indira Gandhi and Devaraj Urs were likely to be able to do for harijans. Are we getting across? The crowd was silent but many in the crowd were certainly thinking. What were they thinking about? How can the privileged understand the silent celebration of the downtrodden? Even if we were getting a cross, where was the organization to take our message to thousands of villages? I suddenly remembered a conversation I had with an old Harijan woman in a village near Mudigere. I had asked her what she would do if her son were to terrorise her village, bully and insult and beat up people. Without a moment's hesitation she had said "I will stop him". I narrated this story to our Kaimara audience and asked them who was a real mother, this old harijan woman or Indira Gandhi who was unable or unwilling to control Sanjay Gandhi? We had made a breakthrough. We said that only a harijan mother had the right to raise her hand in benediction, not Indira Gandhi. Would anyone volunteer to take us to their homes? Dozens of hands shot up. It was a joyous group of boys and children and men who took us to the nearest cluster of huts. It was a child of five in many arms who led the slogan "Desh ki mata harijan mata", as also the slogan "Desh ki neta harijan mata". We met several young and old Harijan mothers and sought their blessings, we told them that as caste-Hindus it was our wish and prayer that in our next birth we would be born in harijan families, that if we were to be killed in this campaign (not a piece of fantasy after Gayatri's fate) we would wish to be cremated where they cremated their dead. We did not ask for votes, but they promised us that they would tell as many people as possible that we had come and sought and received their blessings. The hugging and kissing was endless! It occurred to me that what would transform our country is not the anger, but the passion of the poor, not their subservient loyalty to this or that leader, but their proud and undefeated vitality and virility which had survived the insult of centuries.

Back in Chikmagalur we found that the mammoth meeting was petering out. Kripalaniji had spoken, George had spoken, Karunanidhi had spoken, so had many others. Would Janata win? I had my doubts, but the question seemed strangely unimportant. I kept thinking of Alice Fernandes' warning to Indira that she may be very powerful, but she should not forget that god is more powerful, a warning which I believe she has conveyed to George too! We have lost a battle, but we will surely win the war against the power of lies, against the arrogance of power, against the complacency of office. Against time?

RAMCHANDRA GANDHI



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Asides

Election holiday in Government offices



WALKING through the corridors of New Delhi's crowded Government offices — the many "Bhavans" — one rarely sees people busy in anything but making wise-cracks, gossiping, reading novels, squatting on lawns, and listening to cricket commentary. Official work is only an interruption in the daily routine of amusement.

Of the two canteens in Krishi Bhavan, one for the agriculture department on the fourth floor, and the other for the rural reconstruction department on the third floor, the one on the fourth floor is always crowded, from morning to evening. Seldom does one find a vacant seat in the canteen, which is the favourite haunt of employees in the building because of its large stock of eatables. The crowd in the canteen explains why employees are frequently found absent from their seats during office hours, which for most are between 11.30 am and 4.30 pm.

Another explanation is the ridicu-

lous "onion sale" in front of gate number one of Krishi Bhavan. In fact, "if a peon or employee is absent, the next place to look for him is always near the onion truck", said one officer in the Agriculture Ministry. About five to ten trucks come every day to sell onions at half the market price. A large number of people queue up for the sale, which lasts throughout the day.

The telephone bill of a senior official in the Indian Council of Agricultural Research came to the abnormally high amount of Rs 30,000 in the last three months. According to sources in various ministries, most telephone calls are made to the officers' batch-mates, who may be posted in other ministries. There is also evidence of continuing misuse of Government transport for private purposes. A directive had been issued sometime back restricting the use of official cars by officers, but this has not helped solve the problem. The misuse continues, though by a smaller number of senior officers. No transport is available for official work because the cars are engaged by some senior officials to

take them home, or to the market. The erring officials escape censure by getting their PAs (they never do it themselves) to make entries in the official transport registers which read: "Official work".

One remarkable feature of most Government offices, especially those connected with industry, trade and agriculture, is that the respective secretaries or deputy secretaries are often missing between one and two pm in the afternoon. The reason: they are busy attending parties thrown by various industrialists, businessmen and embassies.

The general attitude—right from the top-level secretaries to the lower division clerk—is "No Government, no work". Most Ministers are themselves busy with their electioneering, at a time of acute economic difficulties. If the Ministers are in the capital, they are usually making clandestine attempts to misuse their personal staff for work in the constituencies. The Minister for Agriculture, Mr Brahm Parkash, had gone to the extent of asking his special assistant, Mr Chiranjeev, who holds the post of a deputy secretary, to help him in election work. Mr Chiranjeev chose to quit his post instead, and was subsequently replaced by one Mr Mongia. This is, however, nothing new. It may be recalled that during the time of the former PM, Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri, an order was passed banning the removal of the personal staff of ministers.

A number of high officials have gone abroad, for what is called "training programmes". Dr P. S. Appu, additional secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, has gone to Harvard University for training in "land reforms". Mrs Rathi Jha, another deputy secretary, has gone to Cambridge University for a study course. Mr O. P. Gautam, secretary, Dairy and Agricultural Research Extension, was on a tour of Russia and Siberia at the time of writing. All this at a time of acute shortage and galloping prices in the country.

The Ministries are either headless or under Ministers who are mostly away on election tours. Besides the Finance Ministry, from which Mr Bahuguna resigned, there is a second 'topless' Ministry, following the resignation of Mr Brahmananda Reddy—the Industries Ministry. Most of the work in both the Finance and Industries Ministries is at a complete standstill. Mr Charan Singh had taken over the Finance portfolio six days after Mr Bahuguna resigned, and appointed two Ministers of State. Mr Nathuram Mirdha was asked to look after the complexities of the budget division, economic division, administration of excise and customs sales tax, revenue intelligence, external finance, gold control administration, plan finance division and the Bureau of Public Enterprises and Mr K. Gopal, to look after administration of direct taxes, small savings, CDS, currency, coinage, mints, security presses, controller-general of accounts, the files from integrated



Vijendra Tyagi

financial adviser, defence finance, banking and insurance. The Prime Minister has not been seen in the Ministry for a long time, while Mr Mirdha has been away in Rajasthan and some constituencies for election work.

The result of this state of affairs, which is true for most other Ministries, is a deep distrust and indifference at two levels — first between Minister and bureaucrat, and second, between bureaucrat and the ordinary employee. The bureaucrats regard the Ministers as thoroughly incompetent, and allege that they are attempting to make the best of the remaining period that they are in power. Taking the cue from the Ministers, the bureaucrats themselves feel free to misuse official facilities for private purposes, and as a result, they are distrusted by the junior officers. The result is laziness, and apathy. Government servants are waiting for the elections, in their own unique way.

NIRMAL MITRA

'Janata deserves a better image'

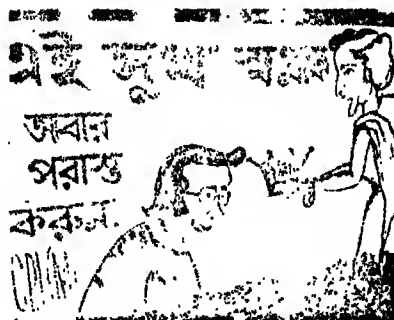
IF there was one person who heaved an enormous sigh of relief when Jagjivan Ram did not switch sides it is the managing director of Ulka Advertising Private Limited, the suave Bal Mundkur. At stake was a high voltage, intensive, over-Rs 40-lakh advertising campaign, ambitious enough to sell what can possibly be the country's next Government and next Prime Minister. Jagjivan Ram's picture was the only Janata leader's image to feature in the 10 advertisements that appeared in December in 13 languages in the nation's dailies.

"It's not like selling soap, toothpaste or detergent", says Mundkur about his job of selling an image of the Janata that people would buy.

"The only parallel to selling a political Party is the image-building we do for ITC, Bombay Dyeing or Gabriels". Mundkur's task is difficult, to put it mildly. In fact, various top agencies that were approached by other political Parties politely declined the offer on the ground that there was no time, or the Parties didn't have anything to sell, like the National Party for instance. But a leading young ad agency owner said: "It's possible to sell a leader to the nation as one sells soap, only it is more meaningful and purposeful. In the case of a political Party you package a human being and interpret him in terms that he may not be in reality. In fact, if you're good you can get a moron elected."



The writing on the walls



Alok Mitra

THOUSANDS of houses in West Bengal have been turned into living media for election messages. The war for grabbing the walls was over long ago. Whatever space different Parties have been able to corner has now been covered with political slogans although writing on walls is legally banned. Walls attract maximum attention. Some political Parties have used the medium adroitly with colour and illustrations and political poets have improvised rhymes. In some Calcutta street corners, cartoons of political leaders evince not only a sense of humour but also the professional calibre of the artists. This year, for various reasons, posters have completely disappeared from the election scene and illustrated walls are now all the rage.

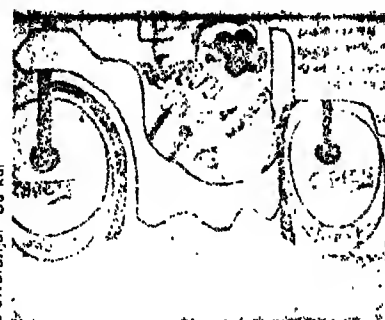
Samples of the graffiti: 'Vote for CPI(M) to stall the onrush of autocracy and communalism'; a Congress(I) message denounces the CPI(M) as 'murderer of Marichjhapi refugees and dock workers' an SUC slogan highlights

the Party's stand against the 'so-called pseudo Leftists'. The Congress's main crusade is against the 'Sanjay clique'. Portraits of Mrs Indira Gandhi have appeared on walls in different sizes and with varying likeness to her. The Congress(I) election symbol of the hand has proliferated every wall. The CPI(M) has also drawn 'the hand', but it is stained with blood: 'Do not vote for the dirty hand', say several CPI(M) inscriptions.

Who does 'art work' on walls? Suresh Paul, a young bearded artist told me: "I am a Party worker. I have a sign painting shop but I do not charge the Party any money for writing". Suresh



Pritimou Chakraborty



Biswaraj Sarkar

said that although he had never been to an art school, some art school students were working for his Party.

Graffiti first appeared in West Bengal during the Sixties. At that time it was on a low key and the professional touch was missing. During the early Seventies, the State Government passed a law forbidding the disfiguring of walls. Midnight swoops by the police stopped 'wall-writing' for a long time. But writings by the extremists and national Parties went unabated till the Emergency. To the general public, reading the writing on walls is fun. But to homeowners it is a cause for worry. "After all, re-painting of walls involves a lot of money", said a troubled homeowner in south Calcutta. "Why don't you lodge a complaint with the police", I asked. The middle-aged business man smiled and merely said: "No, no. They have grabbed my wall, not my house."

PARTHA CHATTERJEE

*She's so warm...
 She'll shower warmth on you...
 She's no trouble at all...
 She's waiting for you...
 She's - VENUS!*

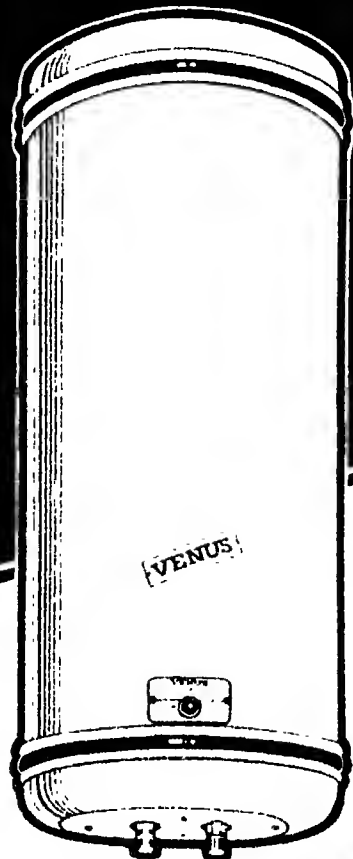
Venus the water nymph adds elegance to your bathroom, serves you admirably through Winter, efficiently all through the year.

Venus bears the stamp of quality — the ISI mark.

- No vent pipe — saves you up to Rs. 200 on installation and also on power.
- Built-in pressure release valve and patented semi-return device — first introduced in India by Venus — gives you trouble-free service.
- More copper for longer life
- British standard element
- Special indicator lamp — burns while the element is working.
- Range: 10, 25, 35, 50, 70, 100 litres.
- Horizontal models & Instant Heater also available.

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- Available with leading Electrical & Sanitaryware dealers all over India.

VENUS®

WATER HEATERS

Take her home today

IS: 2082





Council where the voter is supreme

It has happened before, though not in India. In the United States four years ago, Ralfshoon, 46, was an unknown operator of a small southern shop in Atlanta, with a billing of less than \$1 million. His major client was an obscure Governor of Georgia and a former peanut farmer named Jimmy Carter. Ralfshoon's agency plugged for Carter, selling him as a decent, honest, well-intentioned southern gentleman. And it worked. Today Ralfshoon is a \$56,000 a-year-plus perks top adviser on communications and media to President Jimmy Carter. Ralfshoon also became a "verb", in Washington lingo, meaning "Image Building". Of course, Ralfshoon must be down in the dumps because that's the current image of his once top-of-the-world client. But that's the ad business.

Mundkur's problem was not that of selling something obscure. His client, Janata's top "model", Jagjivan Ram, was a guy with itching soles and until the campaign was released the agency was not sure about the model's chances. Jagjivan Ram has been "sold" as one who is the most able and can provide the "stability" needed.

About the planning of the campaign and why he took it up, Mundkur says that his approach was on a purely client-agency basis, "and the Janata is a very good client. Our team met every top leader of the Party, ran through their credits and debits, our brief was clear-cut, like no tall claims that the Party would not be able to fulfil, not denigrating anyone, etc".

"My main astonishment", says Mundkur who is personally not as enthusiastic about the Janata as he was in 1977, "was that they have done so much and have never projected it. Like for instance their Antyodaya programmes, land under irrigation, easing procedures for haj pilgrims, exchange visits between Pakistanis and Indians. They never toppled as many States as Mrs Gandhi did. She toppled 27 Governments in her 11-year rule. But as people say they were so busy with their infighting that they had no time for disseminating news about their achievements".

Mundkur and the Janata Party have set a new trend which may be followed in future elections. Of course, there are doubts about the efficacy of using an ad agency for a political campaign. Said a former member of the Communist Party and an ex-ad agency man himself, "This is a sure sign that political Parties and leaders have lost the knack of feeling the pulse of the people so they have to go in for image building to inveigle the voter".

The Janata's general secretary, Nanaji Deshmukh, however, disagrees. He says, what's wrong with using an ad agency? Don't we get artists to do our posters and lettering? What's wrong if we go in for professionalism in campaigning? January 6 will reveal it all.

OLGA TELLIS

"TAKE a hard look at each candidate and satisfy yourself that he or she is worthy of the precious vote by which you transfer your sovereignty to your elected representative", says a pungent sentence in an "appeal to voters" from the Voters' Council which was set up on October 25 by a number of prominent citizens of the capital. Among them are Messrs V. M. Tarkunde, Kuldip Nayar and George Verghese. The council proposes to educate voters "about their rights" in an election or otherwise, but its thrust is conspicuously against "authoritarianism, the cult of personality and extra-constitutional tendencies".

The council has a novel draw-it-yourself emblem: a sun, representing vitality and purity, with seven rays representing the seven principles enshrined in the preamble to the Indian Constitution: democracy, socialism, secularism, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. The council is meant to have constituency-wise branches which will be bodies of local citizens who will work for the rights of voters, even after the elections, as vigilance bodies, social action groups and people's committees made famous elsewhere. "Any person of integrity who believes in democratic values, is free of communal, casteist, regional or other parochial tendencies, is not a member or active sympathiser of any political Party, and does not intend to run for office" is eligible for membership of the council.

The formation of a cell in the capital was decided on the initiative of the Coordination Committee for Strengthening Democracy (CCSD), which is itself an association of a number of bodies including the Gandhi Peace Foundation, Lok Svak Sangh, Sarva Seva Sangh, National People's Committee and the Hindustani Andolan. The Voters' Council, however, is not intended to be an apex all-India body. The plan is to encourage the setting up of branches in as many of the 642 parliamentary constituencies in the country as possible. The initiative for this is expected to come from the local branches of the organisations which form the CCSD, and where there is no branch of the organisations which form the CCSD, from other bodies or prominent citizens in each area. Each Voters' Council shall remain an independent and democratic unit responding to the needs and aspirations of individual constituencies and communities.

The council does not profess any programme or ideology, does not claim to be anything approaching a political Party. It will only uphold the basic values and spirit of our

Constitution. With these in mind, it aims to persuade voters to shed their apathy and cast their votes on the polling day. The idea that 'I will not vote because there is none to vote for' is a most dangerous one, and needs to be guarded against. "If a person does not vote, he only permits vested interests to take over the country. He then has no right to later complain against the Government, because he has refused to take action himself", explained Mr George Verghese, one of the council's members.

In order to ensure that voters exercise their franchise in the proper manner, the council plans to promote an intelligent understanding of issues facing the country, the programmes of the contending Parties, the background of the rival candidates. (It has drawn up a blacklist of about 30 names of persons who have been held guilty by various commissions of enquiry of corruption, favouritism, nepotism, and such other offences.) It also proposes to educate voters about the codes of conduct laid down by the Election Commission to ensure that the poll is free and fair. It will monitor the activities of the elected candidates after the elections, to see that they keep their promises—either at the individual or Party level and explain the manifestos of various Parties to the electorate.

As for the immediate future, the council's unit in Delhi plans to sponsor a public debate between five national Parties—the Janata, Lok Dal, Congress(I), Congress(U) and CPI(M)—at a forum where a panel of voters can freely put questions to them. "The voters are increasingly being taken for granted", Mr Verghese said. People have no qualms about contesting from two or three different constituencies. "If Mrs Gandhi gets elected from both Medak and Rae Bareilly, she will obviously have to forsake one constituency. What happens to the people there? What about her promises to them? Again, there are cases of people getting elected from one constituency, and then shifting to another in the next election. Why don't they work for the people they made so many promises to?" Mr. Verghese asked. It is these questions the council shall try to find answers to. "I am sure that the electorate is fairly educated already, is showing signs of maturity, and a distaste for the feeling that they can be bribed". Mr. Verghese said. Explaining the only philosophy — of voters' sovereignty—that the council claims to espouse.

NIRMAL MITRA

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Comfortable • Dependable • Economical



Mark 4 is carefully built with an eye on little details that add up to a great deal in the long run. Whatever you want out of a new car—elegance, comfort, reliable motoring, economy—you get them all with the new Mark 4. And in good measure too! Consider the many advantages Mark 4 has to offer—and then decide!

Superb styling :

Mark 4 is elegant in appearance, perfectly in tune with the times.

Unmatched comfort :

Mark 4 seats up to six in comfort—a benefit no other Indian car can offer! There's also more headroom, legroom and elbow room, for a relaxed trip. And for easy and fatigue-free driving, Mark 4 comes fitted with a quick-response steering that answers your every command

Dependable performance :

Mark 4's sturdy, built-to-last body and power-packed 1489 cc engine ensure years of reliable motoring.

Excellent economy :

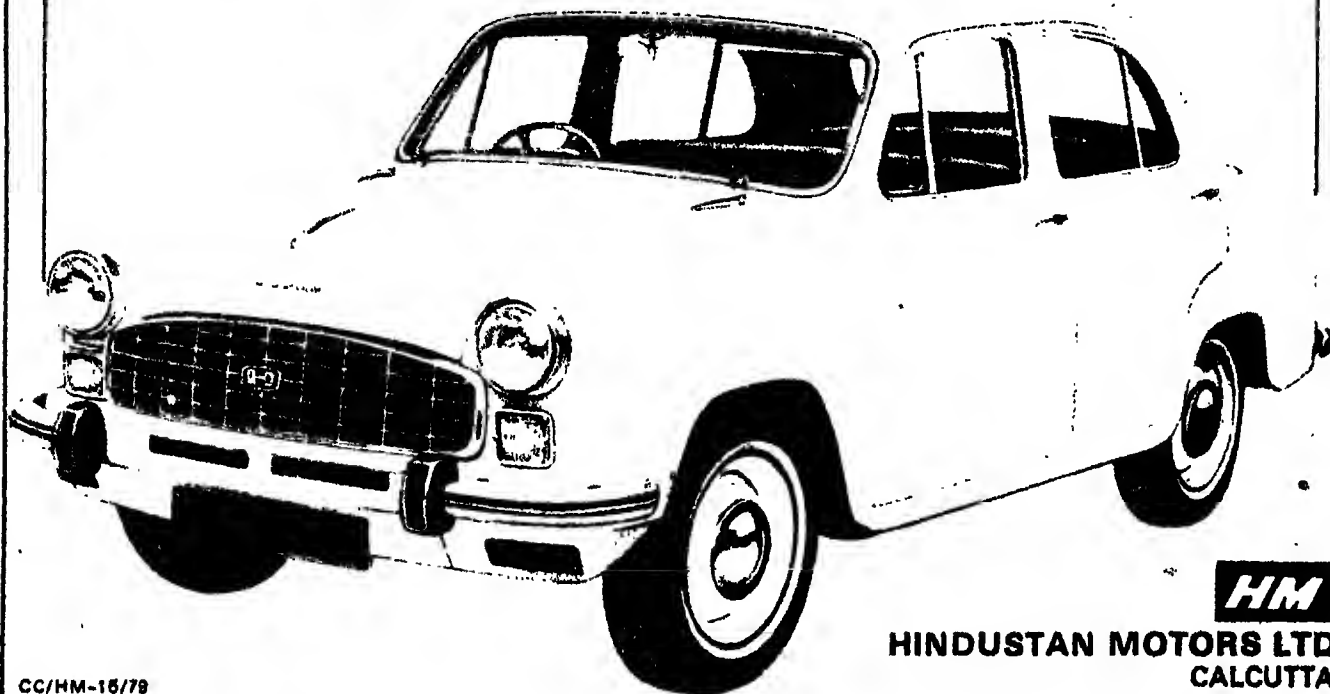
Mark 4 is low on fuel cost per passenger kilometer.

Easy economical maintenance :

Mark 4 is easy and economical to maintain with genuine spares readily available at moderate prices through HM's country-wide after sales service network

Mark 4

the latest Indian car on the road today !



**HINDUSTAN MOTORS LTD
CALCUTTA**

CC/HM-15/79

ONE *Shatru* in the industry was bad enough... and we thought that he could have no parallel, at least in the department of talking. Not only has he got a parallel but an heir too, who might carry on the tradition if he lasts long enough. His name is *Raj Kiran*. He was given a break by none other than B. R. Ishara (remember he had given *Parveen Babi* a break too) some years ago. Now that a film or two of his has clicked and he has a couple lined up — one of them being made by *Subhash Ghai*, *Shatru's* friend — *Kiran* has really started talking and he doesn't know how to stop! And what makes him more like *Shatru* is the utterly careless, tactless style with which he talks about people and things *Shatru*-like. The names of women *Raj* admires are advertised from the rooftops. During an outdoor shooting with *Ghai's* unit, he openly went around stating his preference for *Simi*,

because he saw that heroine *Tina* was either giving him no *bhau* or was occupied with guns trained on other sights! So the unit had to put up with *Raj Kiran's* *Simi*-chant.

THE shyness or modesty exhibited by *Hema Malini*, when she had to wear a *Santal* dress (which means, very little on top with a skimpy, *nuni-sari*) is something strange. It seems, director *Premi Sagar*, for his film *Hum Tere Aashiq Hain* had to do a lot of coaxing before *Hema* agreed to wear the tribal costume. But way back, even before *Hema* remembers I guess, she had bared her pretty shoulders for her very first film *Sapnon Ka Saudagar*. Some of her fans who saw her on TV wiggling her bare shoulders for a song, as she danced around *Raj Kapoor*, said at once that a girl who was sporting enough in her maiden venture, should not be downright prudish in her latter films.

Mihun Chakraborty



Prema Narain

THE reason *Shammi* the comedienne gives when she is asked why she is looking so glowing these days, is that she is heartfree. "Leave domestic worries and a husband and heartaches, and that is the look you get", she laughs. Though this is a facade she is putting up for the final break-away from husband *Sultan Ahmed*. They had an official divorce recently and now she knows there is no returning to him. It is rumoured that

the second wife he had, *Shammi*, is not so fortunate.

THERE is a strong rumour that *Hema Malini* will soon be moving out of the palatial house she had been living in with her family all these years. She is reported to have bought another house where she will be living alone! A peace-loving girl who got quite heart-broken when she lost her father, wants to live quietly on her own.

The Zodiac album. Of menswear.

Why this album has taken 25 years to compile.

Like the seasons of the year, fashions are in a constant cycle. What was 'stylish' in the twenties came back in the seventies. The Gatsby look. Narrow ties. Short collars. Pleated trousers with narrow bottoms. This sweep and flourish of fashion is what Zodiac is all about. This is the world of Zodiac—and has been for 25 years.



Ties: A superb range of fantastic prints, stripes and checks.



Belts: Genuine leather. Also reversible belts—specially designed to fit a range of smart Zodiac buckles. There are Zodiac elastic belts for casual wear.



Socks: Nylon. 'Cotton'—perfect for Indian conditions. Now all Zodiac socks have a wide elastic band—wider than any you've seen, for greater comfort.



Shirts: Choose from woven and knitted, 100% cotton, polyester blends and pure silks.



Kerchiefs: In presentation packs of three. Texture—so very soft. Choose from masculine designs (woven and printed) or just plain white. Monogrammed kerchiefs as well.

ZODIAC

Making news in the world of fashion for

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10/76 Haines Road, Bombay 400 018.

It's a shame that Sivaji Ganesan, the celluloid drum-beater for the Congress (I) should have two flops on the eve of the elections. His *Pattakkathi Balaravan*, starring Sridevi and Jayasudha was such a flop that its maker Rajendra Prasad, a well-known name in Andhra, may not touch a Tamil film again. Unless of course, Sivaji offers to act in his film and give him "bulk" dates. And this Sivaji Ganesan is capable of doing: He stands by people who make flops starring him.

In *Vetriku Oruvan* Sivaji was tolerable in the sprightly moments during the first quarter but as a man who is possessed by the vendetta-urge, he was listless. This film looked a sure hit on paper: written by Panju Arunachalam, directed by S. P. Muthuraman and with music by Nayaraja. But it had no takers. A "C" grade Bombay film *Khoon Ka Badla Khoon* being screened in the same theatre was drawing bigger crowds.

THERE is already one Latha, why should there be a Sumalatha, some producers said, when the debutante from Andhra turned up in Madras to try her luck in movies. Her mother said that she won't change her daughter's name. Now with the success of her maiden film *Thisaimariya Paravaigal*, people have started saying: "Oh, what a nice actress, what a nice name." In the second half of the film Sumalatha played a Catholic nun. The news that Mother Teresa had received the Nobel prize was utilised by the producers of the film. In less than no time they came out with banners and posters showing Sumalatha as a nun on one side and Mother Teresa on the other.

IN the Sixties, it was often said that the presence of M. R. Radha gave a film a longer run, even when MGR played the hero. But a couple of his films released after his death couldn't do well: He played important roles in both *Pancha Bootham* and *Yarukku Yuar Kaval*. Srikanth played the hero in both films.

S Rajnikant planning to act a full-length comic



Rathie Agnihotri

Shobha



role in an upcoming Tamil film, suspected to be a remake of *Gol Maal* which would be directed by K. Balachander? Rajni did show his flair for lighter roles in Balachander's *Ninagithale Inikkum* but that poorly-scripted musical was a miserable flop.

MADHVI, the upcoming Telugu heroine, has bagged the prized heroine's role in Kamalahasan's first film as a producer. Strictly speaking, this is not her first Tamil film. She was signed for two films but those are not showing any signs of progress. Director K. Balachander seems to have recommended Madhvi's name to Kamalahasan.

A DECADE ago, an ambitious producer wanted to make a film on the life of Christ. And MGR was signed to play Christ. Some orthodox Christians were so shocked that they wrote letters to the tabloids published by churches saying that a man who claims to be an atheist cannot play Christ. It is believed that the abortive film venture is still remembered by MGR. If a producer will cough up enough lolly, and MGR can spare time from politics, this will be the kind of film he'd love to do.

ACTRESS-DIRECTOR Sheela was annoyed when her "discovery" Anuradha took up an assignment before the release of *Kadalikka 90 Naal* which starred Sheela's husband, Ravichandran. Anuradha's first film *Kali Koil Kupali* (opposite Jai Ganesh) was released recently. And whoever noticed it?

RECENTLY Tun Tun, the comedienne from Bombay turned up in Madras to star in a comedians' night. Seeing her on the stage one young man exclaimed: "If our heroines don't take care of themselves, they will soon have to appear as comediennes". This seems to be the regular complaint of photographers in Madras. "It's terrible", says a young photographer. "Either they are totally blown up or they are flat and have bad skin".

Ah! TAJ

Brooke Bond

Taj Mahal Tea

Now! in a new pack

Brooke Bond
TAJ MAHAL TEA
Dandelion and Licorice
You'll love it!

TASTE PLUS STRENGTH

Beginning December 30

This week the Sun and Mercury are in Sagittarius, Venus is in Capricorn, Kethu is in Aquarius, Mars, Jupiter and Rahu are in Leo and Saturn is in Virgo. Neptune and Uranus are in Scorpio and the Moon will be moving through Gemini and Cancer from Taurus.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Stellar influences are indicative of success and happiness this week. Elderly relatives and family friends will prove remarkably cooperative and helpful. Younger people may cause some irritation or even annoyance. As a rule do not depend too much on friends of your age group. **Good dates:** 31, 2 and 3. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 5, 6 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) You are advised to guard against extravagant tendencies. Be reasonable in your decisions and handle your subordinates firmly. Exercise caution in all business transactions. Seek the advice of your elders. Your employers or bosses should be kept in good humour; humility should be your watchword during this crucial phase. **Good dates:** 3, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



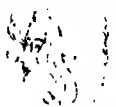
GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) Gain, perhaps through elders and speculation, will be accompanied by heavy expenditure, perhaps involving litigation. Endeavour to please those in authority and avoid arousing hostility. Intellectual and artistic pursuits progress well but keep a watch on expenditure. A secret matter brings pleasure and your health improves. Make changes only after careful deliberation as to probable cost. Avoid quarrels. **Good dates:** 30, 1, 2 and 3. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** North.



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) Minor benefits through an elderly female relative may cause some anxiety, and loss through misplaced things or unfortunate statements involving litigation. Do not be careless in your business affairs, eschew doubtful friendships and concentrate on vocational expansion. Some good fortune will eventually come. But you should try to avoid erratic changes in your lifestyle. Do not lose your temper. **Good dates:** 2, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 9. **Favourable directions:** North.



LEO (July 23 — August 22) Friends and relatives (not elders) will contribute to your success and happiness but be cautious in your dealings with those in authority. Do not be careless; safeguard health of self and children. Travelling is best deferred at the moment. Courage and will power will overcome most difficulties. Adopt novel and original ideas in business because these will pay rich dividends. **Good dates:** 1, 3, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 1. **Favourable direction:** East.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Your ambition will be realised only if get-rich-quick schemes are avoided. Employers and officials will prove particularly helpful. Womenfolk will prove cooperative. Some problems or financial loss is threatened at the weekend. Your hunches will bring success in business. Make necessary changes but avoid battling and shun gambling. **Good dates:** 31, 2 and 3. **Lucky numbers:** 7 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South-east.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) Do not waste your precious money on pleasure or entertaining friends. Difficulties may arise on the financial front. A lot of happiness is also predicted. Eschew gambling and speculative investments. You are likely to gain through inheritance. Law-suits should be handled very carefully. Happiness lies in travelling with your family. Children in the family will do well. **Good dates:** 1, 2, 3 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 9. **Favourable directions:** South.



SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) Refrain from hasty decisions and actions — defer changes, watch your finances and health, especially your nerves. Seek and act upon the advice of elderly womenfolk. Take steps to please those in authority. Young people may make an attempt to deceive you. The health of womenfolk in the family may occasion anxiety. **Good dates:** 31, 1, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 9 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) Your health will improve and a lot of happiness will be yours. Romance, domestic and social activities are well signified and these will contribute to your happiness. Translate plans into action. Pleasant new friendships, courtship and perhaps marriage are indicated this week. Attend to vocational matters and to business carefully. **Good dates:** 30, 31, 3 and 4. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) A happy week: a pleasant surprise through a stranger or female, is forecast. You may make a number of new friends. Womenfolk and children will prove really helpful. Deal confidently with those in authority and settle outstanding differences. This is not the ideal time for love and marriage. **Good dates:** 31, 2, 3 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 6 and 9. **Favourable directions:** West and North.



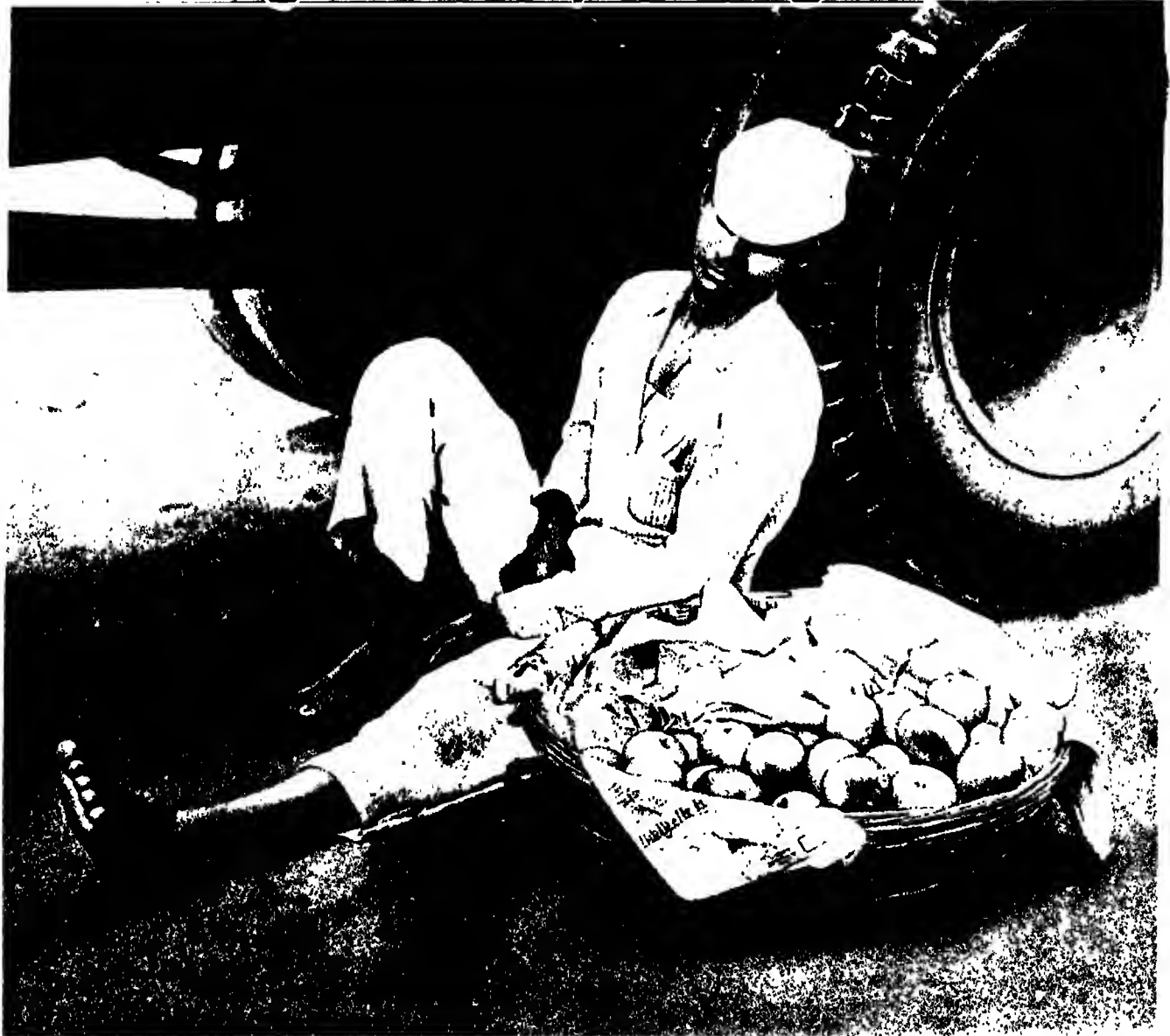
AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) Stellar portents greatly favour you this week, promising steady and permanent success. Gains through elders and insurance policies, and those in authority are forecast. Novel or secret associations will also prove helpful. Excessive expenditure can create a lot of problems. Do not neglect business for pleasure and conserve resources. Children prosper, intellectual activities progress and health improves. **Good dates:** 30, 1, 2 and 3. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.



PISCES (February 20 — March 20) An unexpected, pleasant surprise, awaits you, but do not neglect your professional activities. New friends contribute to your success and happiness. Your health may need extra care and much will depend on vitally important and unavoidable decisions as to the degree of success attained. **Good dates:** 31, 2, 3 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 6 and 9. **Favourable directions:** North.

M. B. RAMAN

His savings are busy earning interest...



Chunilal has been wise. With a loan from Bank of India he has established himself as a fruit vendor in his own right.

Today, having repaid his loan in full, he is still with Bank of India, having opened a Recurring Deposit Account with them.

Besides helping out with loans repayable at low rates of interest, Bank of India has a number of

savings schemes to suit every requirement—Recurring Deposit, Double Benefit Deposit, Monthly Income Certificate - and more.

Come, secure your future with India's largest nationalised bank



CONCEPT BO 44 9



KANPUR: The Hindu Mahasabha has decided to field Mrs Sukhrani Devi, a former sweepress of the Kanpur municipal corporation from Rae Bareilly constituency, for the Lok Sabha poll. Disclosing this, the Hindu Mahasabha organising secretary said Mrs Devi would be the fittest candidate to oppose the "two maharanis", Mrs Indira Gandhi of the Congress (I) and Mrs Vijaya Raje Scindia of the Janata Party — *Times of India* (M. Shahid Jalil, Biharsharif)

MYSORE: A case of death over an inch of land has been reported from Hunsur Taluk. Kale Gowda of Hograhalli was planting cactus on one side of an old fence, which reportedly trespassed into Rame Gowda's land by a few inches. When Rame Gowda objected, Kale Gowda allegedly hit Rame Gowda and caused severe injuries, of which he died according to a note from Mr L. Revanasiddalah, SP — *Deccan Herald* (Shreekanth, Mysore)

RAIGARH: A young man of Awarda village, 32 km from here, is again on an indefinite fast in the house of his father-in-law. Last month he went on a fast unto death in the same place claiming his dowry and managed to get Rs 7,000 with a promise of the remainder within a month. Now, he is fasting again insisting on the balance, which according to him amounts to Rs 10,000 — *Hindustan Times* (Rajesh Karnik, New Delhi)

MUZAFFARPUR: A eunuch, Lakhan Mahto, alias "Anarkali", chief of the local Hijra (eunuch) Sangh, filed "his" nomination dressed as a woman on behalf of the All-India Hijra Sangh from the Muzaffarpur constituency for the coming Lok Sabha elections. Anarkali will cross swords with Mr George Fernandes Janata (S), and Mr Digvijay Narayan Singh (Janata) among others. Anarkali accompanied by hundreds of eunuchs singing and dancing came to the collectorate to file the nomination — *Northern India Patrika* (Arbind Gutgutia, Barabanki)

HYDERABAD: Undeterred by defeats twice, a street-side ice-vendor has again entered in poll fray here. Mr B. R. Chandrasiah, who fought byelection to

Lok Sabha from Secunderabad constituency this year and earlier the 1978 Assembly election, has again filed nomination for Secunderabad Lok Sabha seat. Mr Chandrasiah is an admirer of Mrs Indira Gandhi with a difference. He believes that only Mrs Gandhi will better the lot of downtrodden but at the same time he does not like to contest election on her party ticket. "I want to fight election on my own, as I feel. I can project the problem of downtrodden in an effective manner and, if elected I will redress their grievances", said Chandrasiah — *Deccan Chronicle* (N. Shiva Kumar, Hyderabad)

NEW DELHI: The Grade II MES engineers have decided to stage a novel form of protest, i.e. to perform two extra hours of duty in the department till the implementation of their demands. The Association also decided to call off their scheduled relay hunger strike from December 17 in view of the assurances given by Sri Jagbir Singh, Minister of State for Defence — *Assam Tribune* (L. Miri, Gauhati)

GOPALGANJ: The lowly donkey has had its day here. Dr Nimai Chandra Manjhi of the Bharatiya Gadh (Donkey) Party amazed onlookers here when he rode a well decorated donkey to the collectorate to file his nomination for the midterm Lok Sabha poll. Hundreds of his supporters followed him in a procession shouting "Vir Gadh zindabad, Gadh Party zindabad" — *Patriot* (Humra Quralah, Chandigarh)

BOMBAY: The nomination papers of Mr Jimmy Carter, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and the Shah of Iran were rejected by the Returning Officer of the Bombay South constituency Mr Nandal, as their electoral roll details had not been furnished. Mr Ratan Hasanalingh Butani, an independent candidate from the Bombay South constituency, had filed nomination papers on behalf of the three foreign dignitaries. Their deposits had not been paid but the order rejecting their nomination papers was silent on this point — *The Hindu* (K. Srinivas, Hyderabad)

DELHI: The Delhi Transport Corporation has spent more than Rs 20 apart from lawyers' fees in a suit for the recovery of Rs 5—and the suit is still pending. The suit was preferred by Mrs Mohini Gupta, who has alleged that the fine of Rs five for travelling without a ticket imposed on her was paid under duress although she had not travelled without a valid ticket. According to her, her husband had bought two tickets but had forgotten to leave her ticket with her when he alighted from a DTC bus one stop before her — *Times of India* (Satish Kumar, Raipur)

DOES she (Mrs Gandhi) know the significance of the mangalsutra—Morarji Desai

IF people want her and vote her to power, what can I do—Devaraj Urs

BEWARE, that the hand that comes to you open for votes today should not become a fist to strike at you tomorrow—Jagjivan Ram

IF YOU vote Mrs Gandhi to power, you are sure to have Mr Sanjay Gandhi as deputy Prime Minister—M. C. Chagla

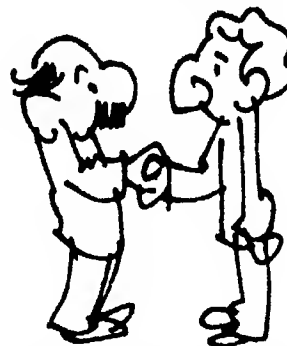
MR CHARAN SINGH could somehow fulfil his dream of becoming Prime Minister but at the cost of sleepless nights of crores of people in the country—Jagannathanrao Joshi, Janata leader

YOU people describe me as a Jat leader but do you know that in 1974 there was not one single animal known as Jat among my BLD legislators—Charan Singh

SARFRAZ is welcome to come. I hope he has a ticket to watch the match—Asif Iqbal, Pakistani skipper

IF I say on print that I like kids, people will start dumping their kids on me. Its like saying I like animals. Before you know it, you'll find 150 kittens on your front door—Roger Moore quoted in This Fortnight

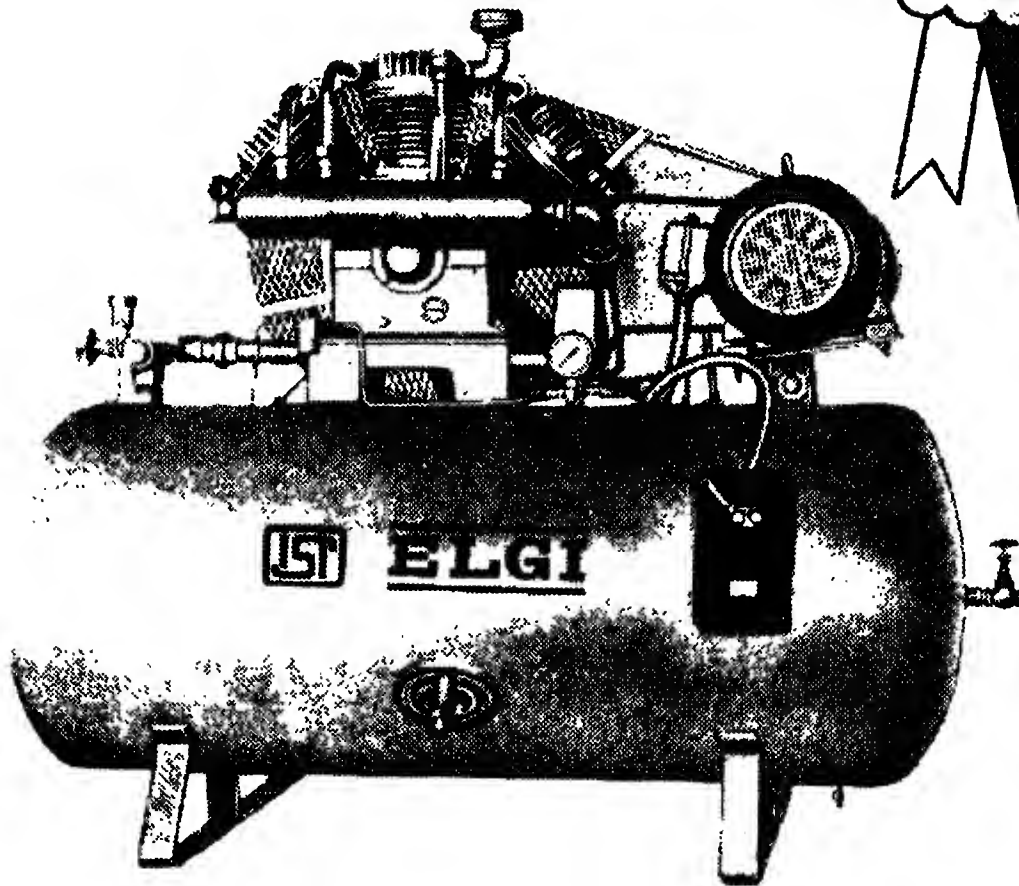
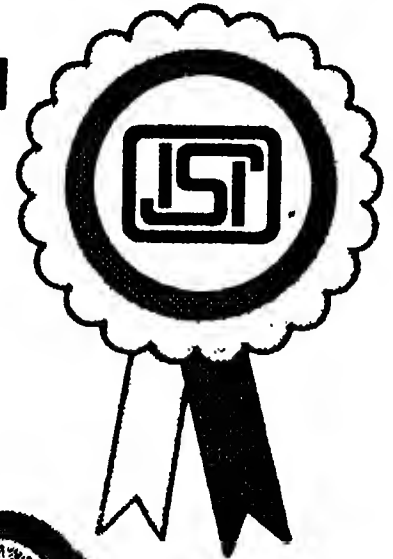
humour in real life



WHEN a correspondent of the Hindu visited Bangladesh, a friendly local journalist insisted on introducing him to literally everybody at the posh Dacca club. As the introductions went on and on, interspersed with drinks, the host's sentences became shorter and shorter, until to someone he just slurred, "Mr so and so...Hindu". The pucca sahib was very offended: "I don't mind", he said, and vigorously shook hands—Aslam Chowdhury, Dacca

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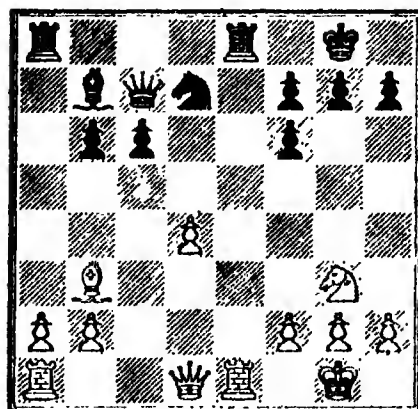
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chess

Dr Pfleger (Black)



Spassky (White) to move
Position after Black's 16th move

Best leave well alone

THE INTERNATIONAL tournament held in Munich earlier this year was intended to mark Anatoly Karpov's first competitive appearance since the World Championship. Fate however proved unwilling to offer a co-operative hand, and after just five rounds, Karpov was sadly forced to withdraw and return to Leningrad, where his father had been taken seriously ill. This was in fact only one of several medical mishaps to befall the tournament.

Even before the first pawn had been pushed Lubosh Kavalek, the American/Czech grandmaster, was confined to hospital and FIDE President Fredrik Olafsson, who had come to Munich just to open the tournament, suddenly found his name added to the list of competitors. Not long afterwards, the young Hungarian grandmaster Andras Adorjan joined the distinguished casualty list by collapsing during one of his games, and was also forced to withdraw. The irony of it all was that Munich was the first ever tournament at which the health of all the players was being closely monitored throughout, as part of an experiment to determine the physical effects of mental stress on chess players. Whatever the outcome of these tests it would seem that the god of ill health does not take too kindly to any scientific meddling into his powers of discretion.

Somewhere in between the various blood tests, pulse rates, heart beats, electrodes attached to various parts of the anatomy ('Za have ways of making you play chess') etc. the guinea pigs did find time for the occasional game. The final result was a four-way tie for first place between Spassky (USSR), Hubner (W Germany), Balashov (USSR) and Andersson (Sweden) with a score of 8½ out of 13. Unluckiest player of the tournament was Robert Hubner, who seemed to have first place sewn up, but lost to Spassky in the last round. Spassky played this game quite beautifully and I intend to publish it in a later article, but this week let me give another of Spassky's victories, against the perpetrator of all the medical intrigue Dr Helmut Pfleger.

White B. Spassky Black Dr H Pfleger
Munich 1979 Caro-Kann Defence

1. P-K4, P-OB3; 2. P-Q4, P-Q4; 3. N-OB3, P x P; 4. N x P, N-Q2; 5. B-OB4, KN-B3; 6. N x N+, KP x N? A perfectly playable alternative to 6... N x N.
7. N-K2, N-N3; 8. B-N3, B-N3, B-Q3;

9. P-OB4, B-B2; 10. B-KB4, O-O; 11. B x B, Q x B; 12. P-B5, N-Q2; 13. O-O, P-QN3? Pfleger came under a lot of (unfair) criticism for his opening play in this game, but only this move is incorrect. His position would be quite satisfactory after 13... R-Q1 (threatening... N x P) followed by... N-B1 and... B-K3 challenging White's dangerous bishop. In fact I am more prone to criticise White's opening play—probably the advance P-B4-B5 is premature as the QP could later become a serious weakness.
14. P x P, P x P; 15. KR-K1, B-N2; 16. N-N3. Threatening R-K7 Black's position is already very difficult.
16... KR-K1? Overlooking the following combination (DIAGRAM)
17. B x P+! K x B; 18. Q-R5+, P-N3; Or 18... K-B1, 19. Q x P (threat N-B5), Q-B5, 20. N-B5, Q-N4, 21. Q-R8+, K-B2, 22. N-Q6+ etc.
19. Q x RP+, K-B1; 20. P-KR4! Resigns. Why? Because he has absolutely no constructive move at all and cannot reasonably prevent the next move 21. P-R5, P x P; 22. N-B5 followed by mate. A beautifully simple game reminiscent of vintage Spassky.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

FOR ONCE Paul Lukacs, in his series, Test Your Play, seems to me to give a poor answer to one of his problems.

♠ 9 7 6
♥ J 9
♦ Q 10 9
♣ A K J 10 3

N
W E
S

♠ AKQJ108
♥ AK 10
♦ 8
♣ 7 5 2

South plays in Six Spades after this bidding

SOUTH	NORTH
1♠	2♠
3♠	4♠
6♠	

Lukacs suggests that South should finesse ♠ J at trick 2, hoping that East will not find the diamond return. He makes the further point that South should conceal ♠ 2, making it more difficult for West to give a suit-preference signal. He quotes this possible hand for East:

♠ 5 4
♥ 6 3
♦ K 6 5 4 3 2
♣ Q 9 4

The answer is weak because East, with this hand, must clearly switch to a diamond. South may hold a singleton loser in diamonds, but hardly in hearts.

Suppose, instead, that the full hand were

♠ 9 7 6
♥ J 9
♦ Q 10 9
♣ A K J 10 3

♠ 3 2
♥ O 8 7 5 4
♦ K 7 3
♣ 8 6 4

N
W E
S

♠ AKQJ108
♥ AK 10
♦ 8
♣ 7 5 2

♠ 5 4
♥ 6 3 2
♦ A J 6 5 4 2
♣ Q 9

Win the first spade in dummy and lead ♦ 10 from the table. East will play the Ace

because South might hold a singleton King. Do you see where that leads? Declarer will play off his winners, reducing to ♠ A J and ♦ Q on the table, while West holds ♦ K and ♠ 8 6. On the last spade West will throw a club and dummy a diamond. Then declarer will drop the doubleton Queen of clubs, because he will gauge that West's last card is the King of diamonds. The Americans call this a 'show-up squeeze'.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



SWISS soldiers mobilised for the defence of their country during the two world wars were allowed to post their mail free of charge. In 1915 the adjutant of the 38th Infantry Battalion, an artist by profession, designed two stamp-like labels for men in his unit to stick on their letters, if they wished, to indicate to the Post Office that no postal charges were to be levied. The idea caught on and other units began to issue their own labels, many of which were sold cheaply in aid of army charities. The Soldatenmarken, or 'soldiers' stamps', were revived during the Second World War and as they usually have attractive designs resembling military posters, they have become very popular with collectors.



SPECIAL stamps are being issued in many countries this year in honour of Sir Rowland Hill, the centenary of whose death falls tomorrow. Considering that philately owes its existence to his postal reforms, Sir Rowland has until now received comparatively few philatelic tributes. He was first portrayed on stamps issued in 1938 for a Brazilian philatelic exhibition, and in 1940 a few other countries, among them Portugal, Cuba and Nicaragua, issued stamps with his portrait to mark the centenary of the Penny Blacks, the first adhesive postage stamps, which he had introduced in 1840 as part of his scheme of uniform cheap postage. The Liechtenstein stamp shown here was one of a 1968 series portraying 'pioneers of philately'.

C.W. HILL

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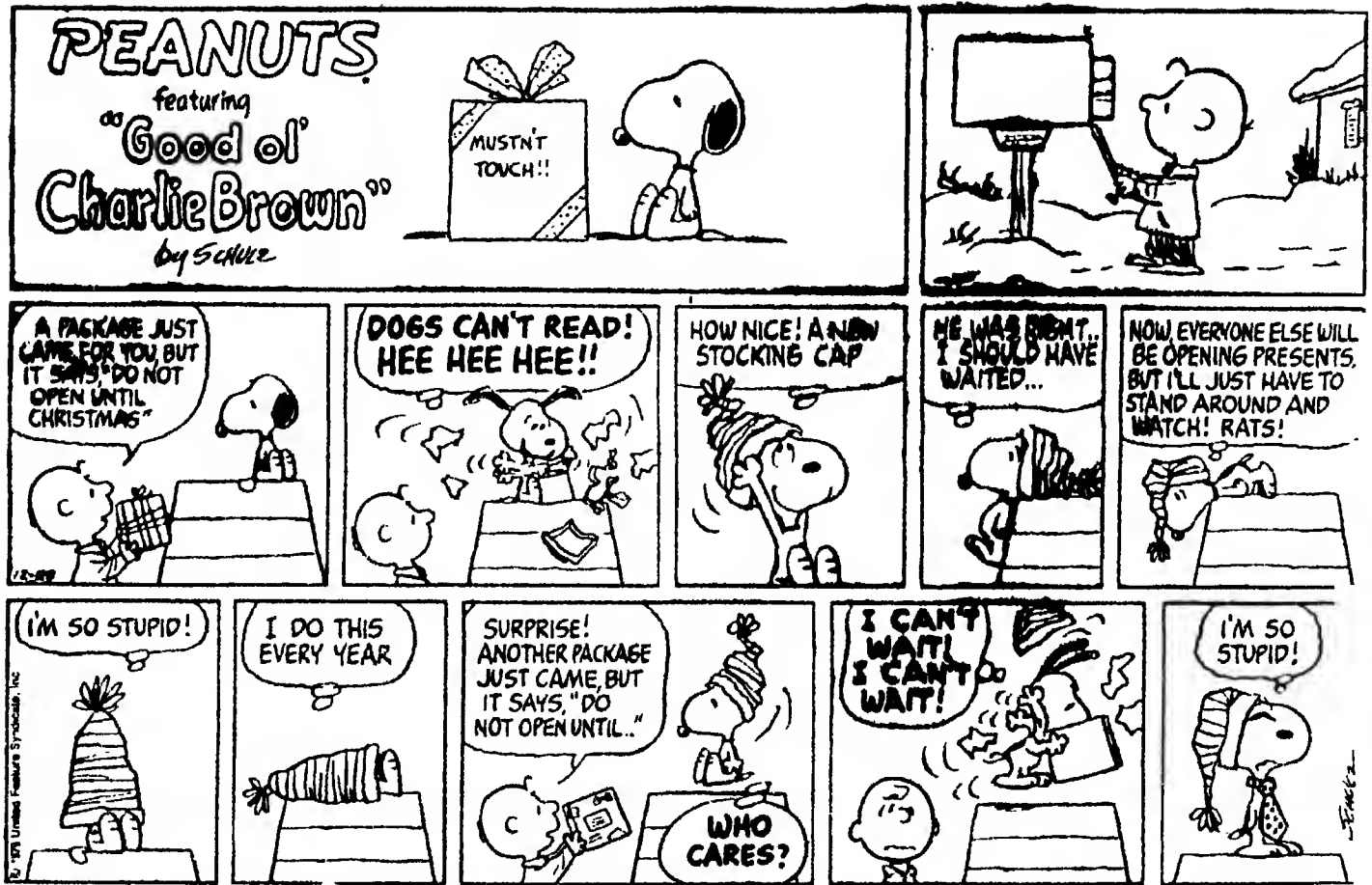
The Kuwait India International Exchange Company (W.L.L.), which State Bank is privileged to manage, will cater to the

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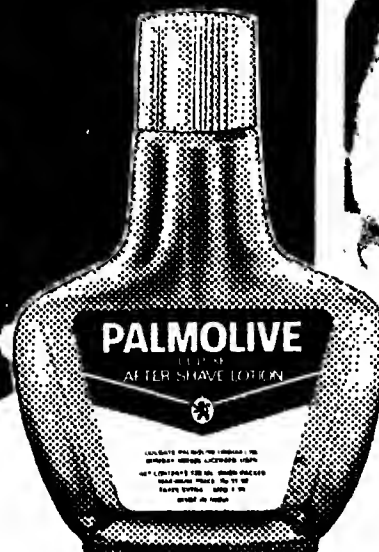
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Notes

Rae Bareilly

THERE is only one person who stands between a massive victory and defeat for Mrs Gandhi in Rae Bareilly. And he is an obscurantist sadhu who has his ashram near Mathura, about 150 kilometres from Delhi. He wears a dhoti and a patta on his head. He has a flowing white beard, and a rough and ready manner. He is also the most influential sadhu in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and his slogans are painted on every second tree in large areas of these two vital States. His real name is Tulsidas, but he is popularly known by the slogan which has become synonymous with his name: Jai Gurudev. He belongs to what are known as the "backward communities", and he is totally opposed to Mrs Gandhi. The reason: during the Emergency he was arrested and shackled, and many of his followers were humiliated. Plus of course he is a "backward" and therefore sympathetic to Chaudhury Charan Singh. A story would illustrate the extent of his influence. A journalist friend, Rajendra Bajpai, went to a village in Rae Bareilly, and collected about 25 people over an impromptu cup of tea. Twenty four of them said that they would vote for Mrs Gandhi, only one said that he had not made up his mind. Then Bajpai asked them what would happen if Jai Gurudev asked them not to vote for Mrs Gandhi. "Phir to hath nahin uthega," said many of them meaning that their hands would not have the courage to stamp the ballot paper in favour of Mrs Gandhi. But this might be an exaggeration. The response that I saw for Mrs Gandhi during her campaigning makes me sceptical about the chances of Mrs Gandhi's opponents. The single line that is fetching her votes is: "Only Mrs Gandhi can run the country". And it is, honestly, a bit tragic that the only appeal by the opposition to her should come from either feudal or religious sentiments.

I am not inclined to dismiss the Lok Dal candidate in Rae Bareilly as useless, despite the barrage of publicity which the city's vested interests have launched against the Party. If the Lok Dal does badly in Haryana, UP and Bihar, it will only be because of a criminal shortage of funds and vehicles, the two vital assets in an election, particularly in a low poll. The backward communities are mobil-



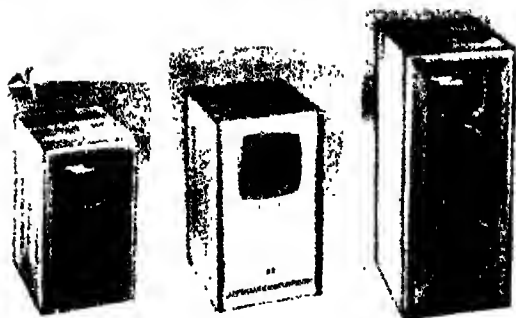
sing under Chaudhury Charan Singh and this is happening silently. But the challenge here is from Mrs Gandhi's personality, and can anyone face that? However, I suspect that Mahipal Shastri in the end, despite everything, might get more votes than the Rajmata of Scindia. This, of course, assumes that the caste factor will weigh heavily in this constituency too.

PERHAPS the most loyal person in Mrs. Gandhi's entourage, who now accompanies her everywhere, is the faithful Kaushal Kishore Sharma, also nicknamed Bhim for his size and appearance. He reached this place in the post-power years, after an incident where he towered over Mrs Gandhi and took the blows of a hostile demonstration on his back, rather than let Mrs Gandhi get hurt. Today he goes everywhere that Mrs Gandhi goes, and he has been with her everywhere on this election's campaign. According to him, the crowds all over the country have been historic, exceeding everything seen in the past. He says confidently that the Indira Congress should win at least 400 seats, and only mismanagement by the Congress(I) workers can damage Mrs Gandhi's chances.

THE biggest trump card that Sanjay Gandhi has in Amethi is the reputation of his main opponent, Ravindra Pratap Singh of the Janata. Not one person has a good word to say about Ravin-

dra Pratap Singh, and he is accused by the people of all sorts of crimes and indiscretions. If the Janata had put up another candidate, the contest would have been tougher. At least the impression I got during a quick tour of Amethi was that the Indira sentiment in adjoining Rae Bareilly will be sufficient to carry the son along to Parliament. The Muslim vote, in particular, seems to have swung totally in favour of Mrs Gandhi—for two reasons: the communal riots under the Janata rule, and the lack of credibility of Mr Charan Singh, the other person whom the Muslims could have voted for. In Sultanpur, as some readers may still remember, there is a mosque near which the police firing on people protesting against nashbandi took place. This became a major factor in causing the Muslim vote to turn away from the Nehru family. Our car broke down near this masjid, and we stopped at a repair shop. There was the inevitable teashop next to it, and predictably we sat there to find out what the local 'hawa' was. Not much enquiry was needed to elicit a firm response: Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay had apologised, and the people would vote for them. The man answering was a Muslim, and he spent 15 minutes explaining why family planning was necessary for the good health of the nation.

M. J. AKBAR



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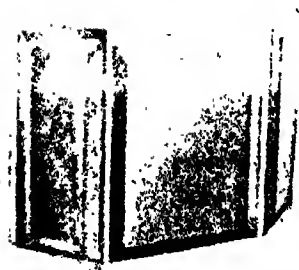
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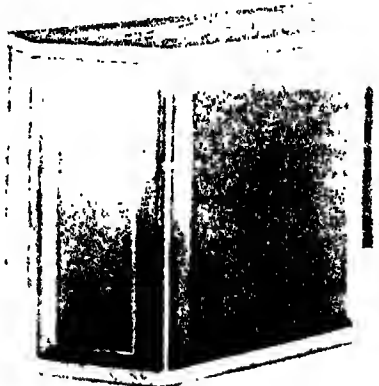
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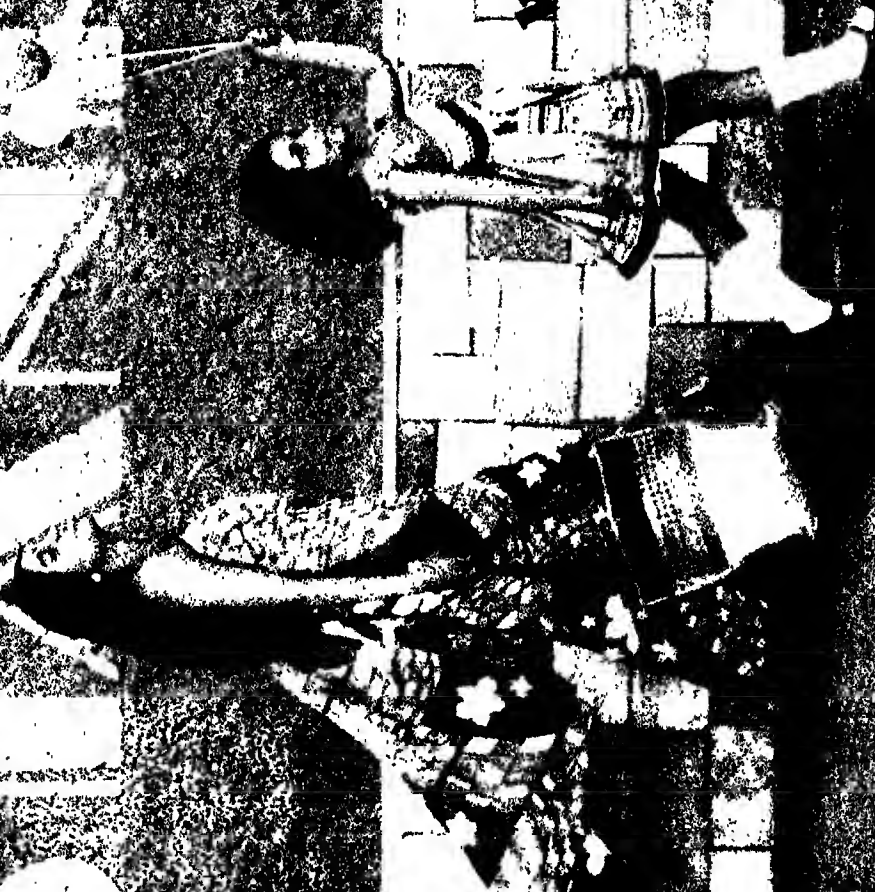
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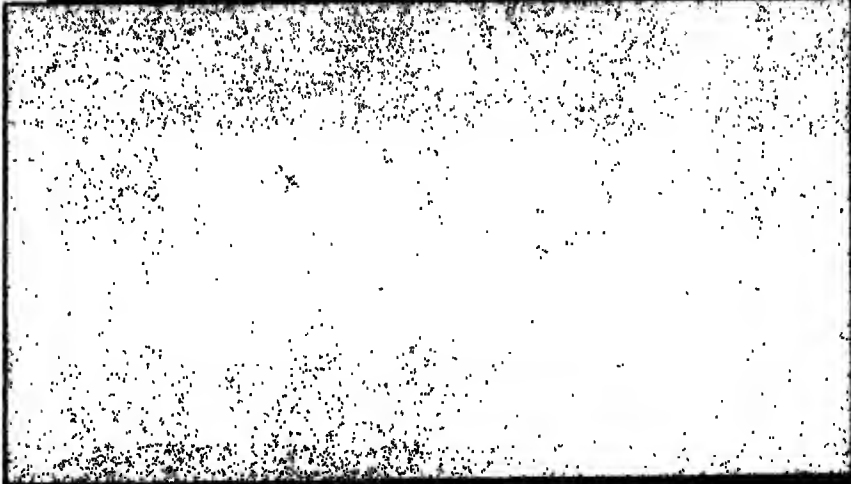
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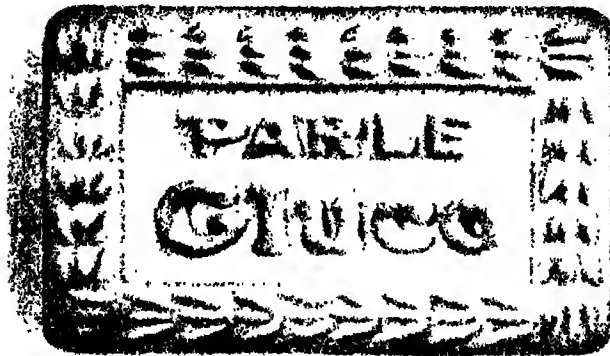
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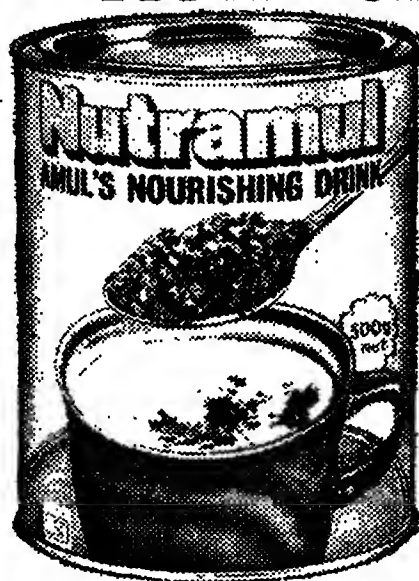
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13 January 1979

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for Lakshmi.

16 February 1979

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9 December 1978

Vijay, a mechanic of Cochin, Kerala, paid the first quarterly premium on his life insurance policy for Rs. 5,000

13 January 1979

Vijay died in a motor cycle accident leaving his wife Lakshmi and a little daughter

20 January 1979

The death of Vijay was intimated to the Life Insurance Corporation. LIC issued the claim forms and the claimant filed the claim papers complete with all the required documents

16 February 1979

The Trivandrum Divisional Office of LIC settled the claim and Lakshmi got the cheque. This was one out of 78,000 death claims settled for a total amount of Rs. 55.05 crores by LIC during 1978-79.

(This is a true life incident. But, for obvious reasons, the actual names have been concealed.)

LIC is constantly engaged in simplifying its procedures. For example, in the case of policies with sum assured of Rs. 5,000 and less, requirements of age proof, surety in the event of policy bond, investigation of claims which are prima facie genuine etc. are often waived. Review of requirements is a continuous process especially keeping in mind the needs of small sum assured policyholders.

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- Death certificate from competent authority
- Policy bond
- Claim forms duly completed by nominee or title holder (It will help if the policy bears the nomination in favour of the beneficiary)

No claim is rejected except on the basis of detected fraud or material concealment

A few cases of delay, however, do occur in spite of our best efforts. Any claimant who experiences delay in the processing of the claim (even after meeting the basic requirements) may please get in touch with the Officer-in-charge of the LIC Divisional Office where the claim is processed, who will be glad to help.



Life Insurance Corporation of India

CNS



While Mrs Gandhi's Party has come to power with an absolute majority, none of the other Parties has the required strength in the House to be recognised as the opposition Party. Will various Parties opposed to the Congress(I) unite to form an effective opposition or will they self-destruct? SUNDAY correspondents interview important members of the opposition to assess their views on how they will oppose both inside and outside Parliament.



India were right on top from the very first day of the fifth Test match against Pakistan at Madras. This was amply exhibited by the Indian tall-enders who battled with grit and determination to push the score. The win when it did come was not much of a surprise but then it clinched the series for India.



The galloping prices of oil and fuel have virtually brought the country's economy and industry to its knees. The only solution to the insatiable need for energy is going to be nuclear power which is cheap and clean.



How was the Cabinet formed? SUNDAY brings out the inside story of pressure groups which worked in the formation of the Cabinet and the factors that played an important part in the allocation of portfolios.

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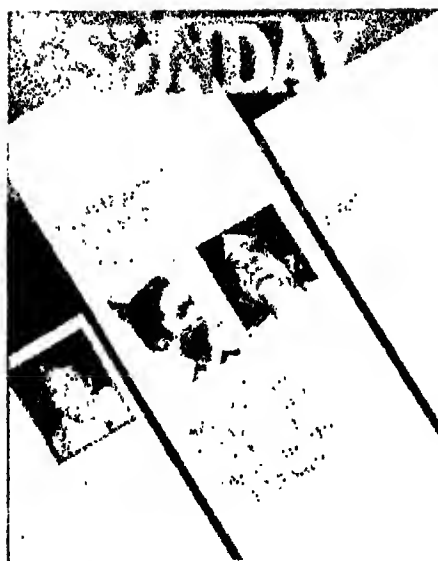
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Cover transparency of Chandrajit Yadav and of George Fernandes by Kamal Sahai, of Chandra Shekhar by Alok Mitra, of Jagjivan Ram by D. P. Sinha, of Charan Singh by Focus, of Behari Vajpayee by U. P. Singh and of Jyotirmoy Bosu by Asoke Bose

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Purely tactical

BARUN SENGUPTA's cover story "Charan Singh-Kamal Nath secret talks" (December 9) showed clearly that Mr Charan Singh did not withdraw the Special Courts against Mrs Gandhi because one camp of the Chaudhury's followers was adamant on the point of not paying any price for her support. If Mr Charan Singh would have withdrawn the Special Courts, his supporters would also have turned against him. The only option was to share the desire of his followers rather than obliging Mrs Gandhi.

His statement about his inability to withdraw the Special Courts was jargon. He cannot hoodwink people by saying so. He did everything to achieve his goal. He once told a newsmen: "What is wrong in my wanting to become Prime Minister? Don't you aspire to be the chief editor of your own set-up? Well, if you don't you are a worm!"

Sudhanshu Ranjan, Begusarai.

THANKS a lot to Barun Sengupta. His article revealed that Mr Charan Singh was mainly responsible for the fall of the Janata Government in order to achieve his ambition to become the Prime Minister for a few days.

Seenaji Rao, Chikmagalur.

THE cover story gives an idea of how Mrs Gandhi treats her fellow politicians. It is true that she always looks for opportunities and looks where her interest will reap rich benefits. Mr Charan Singh has become a victim to the tactics played by Mrs Gandhi on the politicians of our country.

Prahlad Ghosh, Calcutta.

APROPOS Barun Sengupta's excerpt from his book "The last days of the Morarji Raj", one is simply bewildered by the gossipy and fictional

content. This may be a fresh style of new keyhole writing but after a while one gets bored by this unconventional style. However, thanks to the author for providing chatty stuff on the goings-on in the vast political brothel of our country.

Aditya, New Delhi.

THE revealing and sensational facts produced by Barun Sengupta were really excellent. Like every politician Chaudhury Charan Singh is also ambitious but his integrity is beyond challenge. His conversation with Kamal Nath has cleared all doubts in my mind concerning his patriotism and honesty. Compared to Mrs Gandhi and Jagjivan Ram he has a heart for the poor.

Anil Kumar Ojha, Motihari.

BARUN SENGUPTA has peeped in to the background which forced Mrs Gandhi to withdraw her promised support to Charan Singh. Presumptions seem to have worked in his mind as the narration progresses.

R. K. Gulati, Delhi.

All Zia's doing

PETER NIESEWAND's "Witness to a Pakistani lashing" is an excellent diagnosis of the current Pakistani ills that are primarily Zia-made and partly idiosyncratic of Pakistan's history. Judging by the dictatorial rituals being performed under Zia's dictates, Pakistan seems to be heading towards an economic morass. Zia's bullying tactics may keep down public uprisings but will not prevent fate from taking its inevitable course of action.

Samir K. Singh, Patna.

THERE can be no doubt that General Zia-ul-Haq is an enemy of democracy but I wonder if flogging is such a bad thing for certain offences. I think it other enemies of society—blackmarketeers, rapists and those who sell illicit liquor—were publicly flogged as well, it would have a greater deterrent effect.

Bhum Krishnama, Secunderabad.

THE account of the flogging was horrifying. A weak-hearted person like me would have collapsed even before the first lash struck the criminal's bare body. Such barbarous treatment has been meted out to criminals for centuries, but crime and violence continue to exist even today. This is because darkness cannot dispel darkness nor can savage punishment put an end to crime. It may act as a deterrent but only for a brief period and the criminal soon gives vent to his suppressed animal instincts. Crime will disappear the day man understands in totality his mysterious presence and his link with existence.

Jaya Chohan, Secunderabad.

IT is evident from the talks that Charan Singh is not devoid of principles and morals. It is also surprising to note that leaders like Charan Singh and Indira Gandhi indulge in such childish bargaining.

K. S. Raman, New Delhi.

WRITING sensational books on political manipulations has become a lucrative profession in the country. However, one wonders how Barun Sengupta has managed to get the text of what transpired between Charan Singh and Kamal Nath in the Prime Minister's office in South Block. Was it taped by Kamal Nath or Charan Singh? Was there a secret taping device in that room? Or is it that some politicians and their followers manipulated the political negotiations and conspiracies and later supplied this information to the author for a price? As long as there is no way of confirming what is written in these books, readers will consider them as mere fiction.

Annur Ravindran, Bangalore.

THE detailed report presents a thrilling picture of Pakistan under martial law. Whatever may be the conditions in Pakistan under the 'noble ideology' of General Zia, they are nothing new to people of that country. They have learned to live under martial law, and Zia is a leader true to the tradition of the country. What makes him a little different is the resurgence of Islamic zeal in his mind and heart. It is significant that Zia's only political support comes from 'Islam pasands' (lovers of Islam). On the other hand, a large section of the people belonging to the PPP headed by Benazir Bhutto, are apt to overthrow him. Mr Bhutto wrote "If I am assassinated, there will be conflict and conflagration, turmoil and tumult leading to civil war". It is difficult to disbelieve him. Let it not be forgotten that a 'dictator hero' can torture and kill his men but he cannot 'melt them into single man'.

Chandrashekhar Dubey, Bhagalpur.

THE floggings that are rapidly becoming a commonplace occurrence in Pakistan will only serve to create cracks and instability in the administration of General Zia-ul-Haq. His reign of terror and the inhuman atrocities perpetrated by him on the innocent and innocuous masses have paved the way for unprecedented unity among the Pakistanis.

Nobody can or will deny the fact that Zia made a grave mistake by postponing the elections, which were scheduled for November last year, indefinitely. The introduction of medieval Islamic laws in present-day Pakistan is not justified. The year 1980 will undoubtedly see Zia under a great deal of tension. His term as Chief of Army Staff expires in February but even the formation of a

national government will not solve the problems of Pakistan. Millions of followers of Bhutto, who is now considered a living martyr, will in no way pardon Zia, the culprit who has brought Pakistan to the point of downfall.

Soubhagyaabanta Maharana, Bolangir.

BY ordering public punishment for the perpetrators of minor crimes, General Zia just wants to divert the attention of the people from the real problem confronting the country. But doesn't he realise that by doing so he is only setting his own people against himself and plotting his own downfall. The Pakistanis should express their resentment to public flogging by boycotting them.

Rajesh Verma, Gangtok.

Self-seekers

THE article "Why Babuji didn't join the Congress (I)" by Ajoy Bose revealed some startling facts about how politicians manipulate events for the attainment of personal power. The somersaults they indulge in make a bewildering spectacle for the masses and it seems as if ethics and politics have parted company forever. In the opinion of the masses, politicians are all morally dead. They are without exception clumsy people.

Jasvinder Singh, New Delhi.

Godse was a martyr

THIS is in reference to "RSS attacks Mother Teresa" by M. J. Akbar. To hold views contrary to those of a person with a different political ideology does not mean that he should be criticised by distorting facts indiscriminately, even with regard to his learning, education, philosophy and wisdom as the author has done in trying to ridicule the editor of *Organiser* with regard to his editorial on Mother Teresa. The author's emotions have got the better of his reasoning. Since he has been brought up in an Urdu milieu it is natural for him to have developed a hatred against the RSS. The martyrs Godse and Apte laid their lives for Akhand Bharat. It is a pity that those who supported the purely communal demand for Pakis-

Broken promises

I FULLY agree with what Mr Charan Singh has to say in "What I stand for" when he points out that intellectuals speaking from a pulpit cannot educate the people. This is even more true in the case of Ministers in this country. When one becomes a Minister by hook or by crook one turns out to be an intellectual overnight and develops a habit of sermonising to the people in selected and impressive terms of turns of phrases and philosophy. Wherever he goes and whatever he utters, he will devote a great deal of his time and energy to counsel certain do's and don'ts. He will extol the virtues of moral standards and clean living although what he says will never correspond remotely with what he thinks and does. Yet the papers will carry his speeches without fail and with blown-up headlines. Some, in their simple-minded ignorance praise him for his intelligence and wisdom, forgetting the painful fact that words and deeds of these so-called intellectuals are always poles apart.

The sooner our rulers replace this culture with one of learning from the people, the better it will be for our people the masses of this country.

Lekha K. Chand, Rourkela.

tan are treated as friends, whereas Godse and Apte, in spite of their true secular ideology, are called communal fanatics.

We have heard a lot, seen a lot and read a lot about Muslims and their Islam. It cannot be denied that in some countries people have assembled under the banner of Islam and take considerable pride in the fact that their countries are known as Islamic nations. India is a land of religion based on the Hindu philosophy. If Hindus think of India in terms of Akhand Bharat why do the Muslims react adversely? Why don't they criticise the concept of Islamic nations? I am reminded of what Samuel Parr wrote of Dr. Johnson: "Now that the old lion is dead, every ass thinks that he may kick at him!"

Harish Bharadwaj, Darbhanga.

department personnel who also gave him the cooked information of the threat to his life in the IMA Hall and in banning private practice of doctors? If he does not get the consent of the Cabinet he should resign and he should expose the dishonest Ministers in the Cabinet. If the Minister chooses to remove unemployment, corruption and private practice the junior doctors of Bihar will not lag behind in supporting him. Instead, the Minister takes shelter behind the RSS when he does anything wrong and the pro-RSS student and youth organisations defend him.

Dr. A. K. Gaur, Bihar State Committee, All India Medical Federation, Patna.

Unrelated matters

NIRMAL MITRA's "The importance of being relative" (December 2) clubs Sanjay Gandhi and Kanti Desai. This is uncharitable. No commission of inquiry could indict Kanti Desai till now unlike Sanjay Gandhi. Mr. Mitra has not mentioned the Rs. 50 lakhs being raised by Mr. Devi Lal's son for the Kisan Sammelan. He has also overlooked the land deals by the son-in-law and nephew of Mr. Charan Singh.

Jubba Mahato, Bangalore.

Criminal case

"DEATH of a Delhi housewife" (November 18) appalled me. Such writing has made me realise how unreliable investigative stories can be. Nirmal Mitra committed the crime of listening only to the suspected murderer. I would like to point out a few instances to show how untrue the report is.

Mr Mitra states that Mr J. L. Malhotra was suffering from 70 per cent burns. This is a shocking lie. Mr Mitra should have asked the senior doctor in charge about his condition. The fact is that Mr J. L. Malhotra suffered only 5 to 12 per cent burns during the scuffle and was evading jail by remaining in the casualty ward of the hospital on different pretexts. The reporter also states that Mrs Malhotra had an eye for gold ornaments. It is strange that she rarely wore them.

The facts are as follows: Mr J. L. Malhotra since his marriage to my younger sister Santosh had been demanding ever-increasing sums of money from her parents and brothers. He had an eye on her parental house where her old widowed mother and brothers are living. He was forcing her to press her mother and brothers to pay Rs 40,000 to 50,000 by selling the house. Mrs Santosh Malhotra put her foot down and refused to help him. Incensed, Mr J. L. Malhotra stopped giving her money to run the house. In desperation she sold two bangles to meet urgent household expenses. Mr Malhotra seized this opportunity to publicly defame her and her parents.

The case is already being pursued by the police. One thing must be admired—despite pressure and temptation the police have acted efficiently and without prejudice. Now, Mr J. L. Malhotra is in jail under judicial remand.

Manmohan Lal Nanda, New Delhi.

Nirmal Mitra replies:

THOUGH one is not bound to state one's sources, Mr Nanda will be surprised to know that the report was based almost entirely on what was gathered from the police themselves—who were the only reliable source in the circumstances. I visited Mr Malhotra to hear what he had to say and duly recorded his version.

One-sided

CONGRATULATIONS for the image building exercise of the RSS Health Minister of Bihar, Lal Muni Chaubey, by Arun Ranjan, "The unhealthy muddle" (December 9). His record of handling the Health Ministry is: Mass transfer of doctors posted in blocks; suspending two house-staff of the Patna Medical College and Hospital and occasional raids on shops. Who stops him from appointing unemployed doctors, in utilising huge sums of money granted in the International Year of the Child; in apprehending corrupt officials by collecting information from Intelligence

Move, countermove, stalemate

AJOY BOSE reports on the efforts to unite in Delhi

If it was difficult to make sense out of the bickering and infightings among the various constituents of the undivided Janata Party, the vastly truncated opposition that they compose now presents an even more confusing scene. Dazed by their complete rout in the midterm polls, and the threat of dissolution of State Assemblies by Mrs. Indira Gandhi hanging heavy over their heads, the men who once rode the Janata wave so proudly are running around in circles to find a sense of purpose again. To add to the confusion is the apparition of the Urs Congress wandering about like a lost spirit searching for a grave to lie in.

"You are late by six months. What is the use of talks now? We are not eager for unity in a graveyard," the Janata Party president Chandra Shekhar told Lok Dal leader Devi

Lal when the latter approached him to negotiate for a united front against Mrs. Gandhi.

In many ways, Chandra Shekhar represents the quintessence of the dilemma of the opposition. The Janata Chief is an angry man today. He is said to be privately furious with Babu Jagjivan Ram for being so selfish and devious. He is wild with the Jana Sangh for its arrogance which proved so brittle when the chips were actually down. He is angry with Chaudhury Charan Singh and Raj Narain for their relentless battle against the Janata Party in general and himself in particular. But most of all the Janata chief is angry with himself for allowing so many people to take him for a ride.

Chandra Shekhar's anger is only matched by the problems that torment his mind. He realizes that if Mrs. Indira Gandhi decides to dissolve the Assemblies in Uttar Pradesh



Mandira Pune



and Bihar, the only combination which can stop her from sweeping the State level elections is the rajputs and backward castes joining hands. He is also aware that from being just a Central Hall figure, he has become a major leader of his caste, and it is on his call that they will mobilise now.

But, at the same time, Chandra Shekhar is extremely wary of caste politics, and very rightly so. He knows that on a purely caste basis, no Party can ever hope to become even a regional Party, let alone a national Party. He also knows that the contradictions between the rajputs and the backward castes cannot be just wished away. While they might (even this is not certain) come together right now because of reasons of survival, it will be by no means a lasting alliance. What Chandra Shekhar wants is a broad-based Party, but he sees little possibility of that now.

If the Janata Party chief is angry and confused, the Jana Sangh constituent is in absolute doldrums. Of all the political groups, it is the Jana Sangh that has been completely routed in the recent elections. Should Balasahab Deoras's congratulations to Mrs Gandhi for forming a stable government be construed as a guideline for the Jana Sangh? It is believed that the message from the RSS bosses to the few Jana Sangh people who have managed to get into Parliament, is to keep a low profile. The most notable of the Jana Sangh leaders, Atal Behari Vajpayee has already indicated that he does not want to be any part of "a united opposition bloc" and has told both his Jana Sangh colleagues as well as other political leaders to leave him alone.

Apart from the Jana Sangh group and Chandra Shekhar loyalists, what is left in the Janata Party are individual figures like Babu Jagjivan Ram and Satyendra Narain Singh. For Babuji, the recent elections have been an unmitigated catastrophe. No political group seems to want to touch Babuji with a bargepole now, even though he clearly will not be totally ditched by the Janata. But, clearly, the aging leader has obviously waited too long and finally missed the bus. The obvious need is for younger leaders to take over. As for Satyendra Narain Singh, although he might not mind going over with his wife to Mrs Gandhi, the compulsions of Bihar politics might prevent him from doing so, unless he is offered a major bait to cross over.

If the Janata Party lies prostrate, in a state of shock, the Lok Dal is not really in a very much better shape. Although, the rout of the Lok Dal has not been so complete as that of the Janata, Chaudhury Charan Singh seems quite incapable of providing dynamic leadership to a united opposition bloc. While more monolithic than the Janata Party, the Lok Dal also is subject to various pulls and counterpulls. For instance, the individual figures of Charan Singh, Chandrajit Yadav, Biju Patnaik and



George Fernandes, all in the same Party, have completely different backgrounds as well as temperaments. Of these, Biju Patnaik and George Fernandes are both extremely keen on a united opposition and in the first few days made strenuous efforts to bring together the disparate groups. Chaudhury Charan Singh is also not averse to unity but only under the condition that if a united bloc is formed in Parliament, he himself should be the undisputed leader.

Chandrajit Yadav in many ways resembles Chandra Shekhar. Like him, Yadav was successful in the recent elections by going back to his caste base but by intellectual inclination he too feels that caste is not strong enough a factor to build a national Party capable of challenging Mrs Gandhi. Although keen on an understanding between the different political groups in the opposition on common issues, Yadav is wary about hurriedly forming a united bloc.

In fact, he was opposed to Chaudhury making a statement urging opposition groups to come together, possibly under the framework of the undivided Janata Party, on the very day after the results were out. It is also extremely doubtful whether he will accept the package formula worked out by Karpoori Thakur, George Fernandes and Biju Patnaik of having Chaudhury as the leader of the opposition and Chandra Shekhar as the chairman of a united new Party.

One important development in the

Lok Dal has been the increasing alienation between Raj Narain and the Chaudhury, who now feels that the former has become a liability. Raj Narain is, of course, against any moves for a united opposition bloc, and with his prickly personality is not likely to figure in any negotiations for this.

The Congress (U) is in perhaps the most pathetic situation. With Devraj Urs publicly stating that the party should wind itself up, the 13 Party MPs have virtually become independents. Of these, Y. B. Chavan has made it clear that for the present at least he will sit as an independent in Parliament. Four of the Congress MPs, three from Bihar and one from Rajasthan are close to Lok Dal, while Baliram Bhagat from Bihar and Fellerio from Goa could find Mrs Gandhi more compatible. The three Kerala MPs and one from Lakshadweep are waiting for the results of the Kerala Assembly elections and keeping their options open.

In this sort of situation, a united opposition bloc and a recognised leader of the opposition is not really likely. What is, however, possible is common understanding between the political groups on issues. This will be put to its first severe test if Mrs Gandhi decides to dissolve the Assemblies of U. P. and Bihar. That may well decide the way the opposition in Parliament will behave in the future.

HOW WILL THEY OPPOSE?

GEORGE FERNANDES, MP (Lok Dal)

Q: *What would be the future role of your Party?*

A: The Party is in opposition and to that extent it will have to play the role of a watchdog. It will also have to, well, function as the opposition to expose the misdeeds of the Government. Simultaneously, it will have to give the alternative programmes which the party had presented before. I think it is important that when one points out the mistakes and the flaws of the policies of the ruling Party, then one simultaneously shows the people an alternative set of programmes. I think this is the role the Lok Dal will be called upon to play. But don't think the role will be only inside Parliament. The Lok Dal will also have to become very active outside. Because there are a lot of wrongs which are done to the people which can only be remedied through people's action, in other words, individual and collective satyagraha or civil disobedience. I will, of course, hope it won't be necessary to go in for that kind of action. But if past experience is any indication, it will be necessary for us to organise ourselves and the people to fight any injustice by democratic methods.

Q: *Will you go in for unity with the Janata Party, including the RSS elements?*

A: As far as I am concerned, there is no question of unity with a Janata Party which includes the RSS. If the Janata Party delinks itself from the RSS, then unity should be possible because that was the issue on which we got ourselves divided from the Party.

Q: *But the elections have proved that the RSS was a non-issue.*

A: No, I would not say that it was a non-issue. What the elections have done with regard to the RSS is to expose its own weakness in terms of its vote-getting capacity. The RSS people had this impression of their own importance—that they were the architects of the 1977 victory and they were the real vote-getters for the Janata. That claim of theirs has been demolished. It has been proved that they have a certain limited appeal. But to say that it is a non-issue would be begging the question, because the RSS is a philosophy, not merely an organisation. The concept of Hindu rashtira, and so on. It is divisive, anti-national and it is there, so one cannot say it is a non-issue. It is an organisation with a certain hierarchical structure which is not democratic. And it has a

built-in tendency to become fascist.

Q: *And it can also compromise with other fascists?*

A: It can. And therefore to say that it is a non-issue would not be correct. What has happened is that its bloated ego has been cut down to size.

Q: *How would you analyse the election results and in that context compare the performance of the Janata with your Party?*

A: Well, the Lok Dal, in terms of votes polled was a little more than half the size of the Janata Party. In terms of seats, naturally, we are about 30 per cent more than the Janata. The support which the Lok Dal has received is from such sections as are socially and economically backward, exploited people: the rural worker, artisan, craftsman. These sections have supported us in a large measure. The Janata Party support has come from the urban sections. Take for instance Bombay city. Also, Delhi. They won only one seat and lost the rest. But nevertheless their margins of defeat were narrow. They won a seat in Bangalore, and the rest of the seats they have won in the rural areas come from that section of society which are uppercaste, and have social vested interests—the shopkeeper, the trader. And therefore, there is a qualitative difference between the kind of support the Lok Dal has and the kind of support the Janata has. And to me it is a conviction that the Lok Dal is the Party of tomorrow, certainly not the Janata Party.

Q: *Who would be an ideal candidate for the leader of the opposition, an important post, because he has the right of consultation on all basic issues?*

A: At the moment, it is still a hypothetical question because there is no Party with the strength to retain the status of leader of the opposition. If you don't have the strength—the Lok Dal doesn't have it—there is no possibility of coming to an understanding with other Parties in the short term to form a Parliamentary Party. Which means that you are without any leader of the opposition.

Q: *What is the alternative?*

A: There is no immediate possibility of various Parties coming together. We have been having some discussions.

Q: *Do you see any future possibility of a united opposition?*

A: If the idea of a united opposition Party catches on, with the RSS issue and other problems resolved,

if you come to reality, there will be a leader of the opposition. But I cannot say who would be the leader. My own choice would be Charan Singh, because he is the leader of the largest single Party in Parliament. And in the normal course, he should be elected the leader of the opposition.

Q: *But don't you think it is time for the old leaders to retire, because Mrs Gandhi has, by comparison, a far greater capacity to work?*

A: Well, that's a part of the reality of Indian politics, shall we say, that we respect the older generation more than the younger one. Morarji Desai was Prime Minister at 82 and Chandhury Charan Singh was Prime Minister at 78. Well, I think age is not really the issue. The issue is what are the programmes and the policies. Mrs Gandhi was 13 years younger in 1966 when she became Prime Minister, and she made a mess of the country, anyway.

Q: *How would you define the opposition's future course of action?*

A: Much would depend on how the ruling Party behaves. The opposition generally responds to the acts of omission and commission by the ruling Party. If the ruling Party pursues policies that are anti-people then the opposition has got to stand up and defend the rights of the people. If you go back to the earlier years, in terms of an electoral adjustment and so on, there used to be an understanding among the opposition Parties. On the floor of the various legislatures and here in Parliament also, there was always a certain amount of co-operation. But as I said, more important is what happens outside Parliament, and that's where we will wait and see how Mrs Gandhi operates, what kind of deal she gives to the working people, to the rural, landless, artisans, craftsmen, those who are jobless. After all, she is the one who created 40 million unemployed in this country. And now, I would like to know what kind of a programme she pursues in order to get jobs for them, and if there isn't creating of jobs for them as she promised, if there isn't any lessening the prices as she promised, if there isn't getting us the onions and kerosene and diesel as she has promised too... Look at today's Patriot: The law and order situation is getting worse, 'Magistrate attacked' (reading out headline, and news item). At the Tees Hazari court, in an open court, he was beaten up with a lathi. There was a dacoity, and Zail Singh, the Home Minister, goes and visits the victims. He has not been able to prevent the dacoity by visiting them. And here three armed men loot quarters. These are the quarters of poor people—servants' quarters. So it's the poor now who are being attacked by all kinds of anti-social elements.

Q: *Are you beginning to form an opinion?*

A: I have never had any two opinions about Mrs Gandhi—that she is thoroughly incompetent, she operates on the basis of gimmicks, has messed up the country. As far as Indira Gandhi's Cabinet is concerned, they are all non-persons. Only non-

persons can work with her.

Q: About the Left Parties, though they differ in ideology and approach with both the Janata and Lok Dal, is there any possibility of coming together with you, and if so, how viable would that opposition be?

A: There is no question of any kind of a merger or organisational fusion with them. Alliance, yes. Maybe on a number of issues. Take democracy, working class rights, Centre-

State relations, and so on. I think there is a lot that unites us with the Parties of the Left. We are a Party of the have-nots. The Janata is in a different category, but it is just possible for us, even to identify specific issues on which there is a communality of approach, both inside Parliament and outside.

Interviewed by
NIRMAL MITRA

CHANDRAJIT YADAV, MP (Lok Dal)



DHARAM BIR SINHA, MP (Congress-U)



Vijendra Tiagi

Q: What do you think are the chances of a united opposition in the present Parliament?

A: We must strive with all our might for a united opposition under one banner and with a recognised leader of the opposition. This is extremely vital if we are to prevent the institution of a one-Party-state which the Indira Congress is bound to try to impose. I admit that there are various differences between the political Parties in the opposition, but we must try and resolve them because it is quite possible that the ruling Party will try to run the country on the lines of banana republics. In fact, the entire politics of Indira Gandhi for the last four years has been patterned on the Peronist movement in Argentina. If we see the trend in a lot of Latin American countries we see a string of authoritarian and junta Governments punctuated at intervals by relapses to democracy. And this problem can only be resolved if the basic social contradictions in the country are resolved. The Indira Congress is essentially a Peronist and authoritarian Party and the opposition must make a united attempt to stop its designs.

Q: What are the main tasks before the opposition?

A: What are the many tasks and various issues to fight on? I for one will stress the contradiction between the rural and urban sectors: that is, the tremendous imbalance of development between city and village. My own constituency is just next to Patna, but there are hardly any facilities. There is no hospital and there are hardly any roads. You can imagine the plight of the villages in the interior. One thing has to be realised: Mrs Gandhi might have come with a landslide majority to Parliament but that does not mean she has any clue to solving the very many social contradictions in the country. It is true that these contradictions cannot be resolved in Parliament but we can at least articulate them in the House.

Interviewed by **AJOY BOSE**

Q: What do you think are the chances of a united opposition in Parliament?

A: It depends on what you mean by united opposition. If you mean united opposition on common issues in Parliament then that is very likely. Among almost all political Parties in the opposition today there is a feeling that one must come to an understanding on various issues. I think that we will see in the future that on many issues the entire opposition, including the communist Parties, will unite.

Q: How about the formation of an opposition group under one banner which is recognised by the Speaker and has a common leader?

A: This might be extremely difficult and even not advisable right now. Unless we are able to resolve the very many differences between the different political Parties and politicians outside Parliament, how can you expect them to suddenly unite as a group forgetting the past? No political Party, including the Lok Dal which has the largest number of MPs, has the required strength in the

House to form a recognised Opposition group by itself. If we bring in other Parties, there must be unanimity first outside Parliament and then inside. And it should not be a negative unanimity against Mrs Gandhi which had led to the ruin of the Janata Party, but positive unanimity on all socio-economic and political issues. This is possible in the future but extremely difficult now. However, all efforts should be made to arrive at such unanimity of opinion.

Q: What are the main tasks before the opposition?

A: The main task before us is to articulate the various problems, particularly relating to socio-economic justice and poverty, in Parliament. Foreign policy matters also must be raised and for instance, the first thing we must do in the present session is to try and have a thorough discussion on the implications of the arms inflow into Pakistan from the United States.

Interviewed by **AJOY BOSE**

Drugs: are we planning for shortages?

Are we in some danger of drug production falling short of demand? Let us examine the trends

The Government estimates the country's requirement of bulk drugs in 1982-83 at Rs 625 crores. This is to be met by production within the country (Rs 475 crores) and imports (Rs 150 crores)

The production of bulk drugs today is about Rs 200 crores. Considerable expansion has to take place if the target of Rs 475 crores is to be met

The Government's present policy is likely to achieve the exact opposite. Several companies are to be asked to curtail output

If this is persisted with, production targets will not be met. The gap between production and demand will widen. There will be more shortages

Our import bill will then go up further. This is in spite of expertise and experience available to produce these bulk drugs within the country.

Cut in production when the need is to increase production.

When more production of drugs is the paramount need, we have the anomaly of drug companies being asked to curtail production. This stems from the Drug Policy announced in early 1978 under which companies whose production exceeded the licensed capacity are to peg their output at the highest level achieved in the three years prior to March 1977

The Drug Policy is being implemented in 1980. The spirit of the policy demands that a production freeze, if still deemed necessary, should be at the highest level in the three years prior to 1980. This would take into account the normal growth in production brought about by improved processes and practices

If several units in the industry have to go back to 1977 levels of production, a cut back of up to 25 per cent in bulk drugs and drug formulations is likely. The current output of formulations is around Rs 1000 crores. This may shrink to Rs 750 crores. Which means that Rs 250 crores of production will just not be available to consumers. There will be further shortages, necessitating more imports

We can easily make the drugs we are now importing:

Imports are already showing an alarming trend upwards. They rose

Drugs we can easily make in our country are being imported

1978-79 Import of major bulk drugs which are also indigenously manufactured				
Bulk Drug	Unit	Production	Imports	
			Qty	Value (Rs lakhs)
1. ANTIBIOTICS				
Streptomycin	Tonnes	225.0	76.1	280.1
Chloramphenicol	"	95.0	38.5	117.5
Tetracycline	"	244.0	96.5	232.0
Ampicillin	"	10.3	92.0	584.6
				1215.2
2. SULPHAS				
Sulphamethoxazole	Tonnes	22.0	61.9	143.9
3. ANTI-MALARIAL				
Chloroquin	Tonnes	45.0	304.0	791.0
4. ANALGESICS				
Aspirin	Tonnes	1303.0	319.4	47.3
Oxyphenyl Butazone	"	25.0	14.1	42.9
Amidopyrin	"	16.0	95.6	39.6
				129.7
5. STEROIDS				
Prednisolone	kg	1070.0	869.0	69.2
6. VITAMINS				
Vitamin A	MMU	60.0	15.0	39.4
Vitamin B1	Tonnes	29.0	78,710.0 (MU)	201.9
Vitamin B2	Tonnes	7.0	28,338.0 (MU)	109.7
Vitamin B12	kg	165.0	190.0	55.1
				406.1
GRAND TOTAL				2755.1

SOURCE: Production figures - Annual Report of the Ministry of Petroleum, Chemicals & Fertilizers, for 1978-79. Import:- Data compiled by the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health

from Rs 82 crores in 1976-77 to Rs 147 crores in 1977-78 (landed cost). With better planning we can cut down our import bill

The table alongside shows figures of some major bulk drugs imported in 1978-79. It is clear from the table that these drugs are already being produced here. The know-how, the experience and the capability are all available within the country. Yet we are importing these drugs because the existing units are not allowed to expand.

If the objection is to expansion by companies in India with foreign capital participation, how does one justify imports from totally foreign-owned companies abroad?

Today the position is that with all the licences issued put together the production targets set for 1982-83 cannot be met. It would seem that we are planning for shortages.

The issuing of a licence does not automatically ensure production. Monitoring of the progress of licensed units alone will reveal whether the licences are being "converted" into production.

The non-availability of imported raw materials is a major constraint

on several units. Government allocations are not need-based and fall short of requirements. The question comes up again: are we planning for shortages?

The policy now being followed has to be viewed against the needs of the country. The Planning Commission has laid down production targets for the Sixth Plan. India is a signatory to the Alma-Ata declaration affirming the goal of primary health care for all by 2000 AD and medicines are a part, however small, of this long-term objective.

Our per capita availability of modern medicines was only Rs 11 in 1976-77, compared to Rs 79.2 in Venezuela, Rs 54.9 in Brazil, Rs 31.5 in Argentina, Rs 27.6 in Egypt, Rs 17.1 in the Philippines, Rs 15.3 in Thailand and Rs 12.6 in Pakistan.

Yet we are wasting a valuable national asset—production capability already existing within the country. A more forward-looking policy is urgently called for. We ought to plan for plenty, not for shortages.

Issued in the public interest by
ORGANISATION OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCERS OF INDIA
Cook's Building, Dr. D.N. Road, Bombay 400 001

SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY, MP (Janata Party)



THE ebullient Dr Subramaniam Swamy, 40, proposes to tackle every point that Mrs Gandhi made in her campaigning speeches, from gold prices, rising prices to self-reliance in international relations. In fact, her very first move was to "tilt" towards the Soviet Union, said Dr Swamy who won his parliamentary seat by a margin of 39,000 votes, the second largest in Bombay. "In fact, I would have got a much larger margin had Dr Datta Samant (Independent) not cut into my votes in the Maharashtra Housing Board Colony".

Reflecting the equable mood in which the Janata Parliamentary team from Bombay were taking the results, Dr Swamy said: "The Janata Government's performance on the price front and in international relations will stand me in good stead. Her propaganda was completely false. She blamed the Janata Government for soaring gold prices and rising prices of commodities. Can she control international prices of gold? And will she be able to bring down prices? Her relations with industrialists are based on price hikes. Why didn't she abolish the food zones? She dare not because there were big cuts to be made. We abolished the food zones and made food-grain available in every corner of the country. It all depends now on what she does with the public distribution system. But she will never be able, in the long run, to bring down the prices of vegetables, sugar, meat, fish etc., because they will now be exported on a large scale creating an artificial shortage in the country."

On law and order, which Mrs Gandhi also turned into an election issue, Dr Swamy said, "Perhaps we are on a weak wicket, but then in the states where her Party is in power, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, there is no law and order. One significant point I wish to focus on inside and outside Parliament is the need to give the new young generation an opportunity to take over politics. Being 40 I intend to project this issue at the national level".

Interviewed by OLGA TELLIS

RAVINDRA VARMA, MP (Janata Party)

WE certainly have talent, grit and expertise in the opposition benches to meet the numbers on Mrs Gandhi's side. If the ruling Party observes the rules of the game and bears in the mind the role of discussion and debate in Parliament then the opposition can make vital contributions. But if they betray the arrogance of numbers and feel that numbers can substitute logical scrutiny, then they could make the role of the opposition difficult," said the veteran Parliamentary Ravindra Varma who was also the Union Labour Minister in the Janata Government. Associated with the controversial Industrial Relations Bill, in the Sixth Lok Sabha Mr Varma said, "The Bill was open to discussion and I was close to finding an acceptable solution to the industrial relations problem when our Government fell. I'll be surprised if Mrs Gandhi can leave the Bill in its present form and still hope to cope with the situation."

"The Janata Government gave a new shape to the concept of industri-



alisation and planning and increased employment opportunities in rural areas. In a way, our Government tackled the problem at its source in order to prevent migration to cities. We will have to be vigilant and see that she does not reverse the orientation we gave to planning. She has plenty of slogans but her planning is not oriented towards fulfilling the promises implicit in her slogans. The developments in Afghanistan are very ominous. We had improved relations with all our neighbours but now the frontiers of conflict are advancing towards India and it is the duty of all those dedicated to the paramount interest of India to use our position as a nonaligned nation to keep the frontiers of conflict distant from the country and ensure that norms of peace as codified in the U. N. Charter and the Five Principles are maintained.

"We certainly won't be overwhelmed by the Congress (I) majority. It is true that Parliament is a place where numbers count in the ultimate analy-

sis, but it has to be maintained as a place where quality of debate and ruthless and logical scrutiny operate in the examination of proposed legislations, and I will fight to maintain this."

Interviewed by OLGA TELLIS

RAM JETHMALANI, MP (Janata Party)

MR RAM JETHMALANI, who spent much of his time fighting lawsuits on behalf of the Janata Government, said he would fight for three pieces of legislation in this session, namely, the Anti-defection Bill, repeal of the Freedom of Religion Bill passed in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh and lastly, restoration of the minority character of Aligarh University.

Mr Jethmalani does not feel that as a member of the Janata Party his style would be cramped in Parliament. "Our record is excellent compared to that of any Government. After the first flush of the Congress (I) victory dies down, people will realise this. At the moment we do not have a final blueprint of our strategy in Parliament. There are a lot of problems to be tackled but we will in the first place have to keep a vigilant eye on whatever smacks of being undemocratic in letter or spirit of the Constitution. We also expect Mrs Gandhi to fulfill her election promises. Already she has broken her promise to the Shahi Imam. The Shahi Imam had told people in Bombay in his election speeches that she had promised to consult him while forming her Cabinet. He was nowhere in the picture when this was done."

Interviewed by OLGA TELLIS

RATTANSINH RAJDA, MP (Janata Party)

MR RATTANSINH RAJDA who counters the allegations that he was as quiet as a mouse in the last Parliament by saying that he took a "responsible" position as Member of the Parliamentary Executive of the Janata Party, said "I will take up issues like corruption and the simplification of the sales tax. We have decided to function as an effective, constructive group in Parliament to see that democracy is not endangered nor freedom abridged. I don't think that the fact that we were in Government will in any way affect our credibility as an opposition group. As far as implementation of our policies are concerned no one has questioned us on this. It was our quarrels for which we had to suffer", said Mr Rajda.

Interviewed by OLGA TELLIS

Will the opposition self-destruct?

By M. J. AKBAR

THE sulphur of the campaign trail still burns in the hearts of the major opposition leaders. Can George Fernandes forget that the Janata put up one of its strongest candidates against him, and that Digvijay Narain Singh did everything including rigging to get him defeated? Can Chandra Shekhar forget that Raj Narain put a bandage on his head and spent the last two days of the campaign going from village to village in his constituency, Ballia, to promote the prospects of Janeshwar Mishra, the Lok Dal candidate? Can Chaudhury Charan Singh forget that the Janata joined hands with the Congress (I) by withdrawing its candidate Dhara Singh in favour of Ramchandra Vikal in a desperate effort to get him defeated from Baghpat? Doesn't Raj Narain know that the Janata put up Om Prakash in Varanasi not to win but to ensure that he manages to take away a sufficient number of kurmi votes from Raj Narain to enable Kamalapati Tripathi to win? Isn't Madhu Limaye aware that the Janata put up a yadav leader in his constituency, Banka, in Bihar, in an effort

to draw away some of the yadav vote from Madhu Limaye and thus ensure the victory of the Congress (I)'s Chandrashekhar Singh?

And how can all these opposition leaders forget that Mrs Indira Gandhi, during her hectic and amazingly strenuous electioneering, did not once find the time to visit Sasaram, the famous constituency from where Babu Jagjivan Ram was fighting the elections, although she had time enough for every other major leader lined up against her?

These memories are not going to be expressed publicly, but they are the first stumbling block towards any kind of united opposition. One wonders if the Janata and the Lok Dal have really learnt any lessons even after the price they have paid for their infighting, but at least there is a realisation in the more responsible sections of both Parties (and evidence suggests that the various spokesmen of the two Parties are not to be considered among the responsible elements) that mutual cooperation is extremely necessary if they are to survive at the State-level.

The continuation of the opposition Governments in the States has become even more crucial for them after the return of Mrs Gandhi at the centre, as they will form a major

check on her power. Mrs Gandhi would obviously like her Party's governments in the large and crucially important States of the north. She can, of course, simply remove them and order fresh elections in these States, and as a precedence she can always cite the example of the Janata Government itself, which dismissed all the governments in the north after winning in March.

But Mrs Gandhi has two problems to solve before she can do this. The first is that she herself has constantly criticised the dismissal of these governments as undemocratic. The second problem is more complicated. The first act of the new Parliament will be to extend the reservation for the harijans and the scheduled tribes for ten more years; the Cabinet has already decided to place this amendment to the Constitution before the next Parliament. But this amendment needs not only the concurrence of the Rajya Sabha, but also of at least ten State Assemblies before it can become law. Naturally, no political Party would dare oppose the reservation—but the State Assemblies could easily place this business on the agenda for June. Mrs Gandhi needs the presence of the Assemblies to get this passed: she has only three governments, in Andhra, Karnataka and Manipur with her. Assuming she can get some smaller States to cooperate, it is still doubtful if she can get the full complement required. And if she dismisses some Assemblies and orders fresh elections, say only in UP, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, the elections will have to be held without any reserved seats for harijans, as the constitutional amendment will still not have become law by then. Can she afford to do that?

Her problem is compounded by the possibility that if the elections to the State Assemblies are not held soon, she might not be able to do as well in those elections as she has done in the elections to Parliament. Failing to get a majority in any of the Assemblies would entail an enormous loss of prestige, and weaken her power. Equally important is the fact that elections to the Rajya Sabha are due to be held in 1980, and if the Congress (I) strength in the Assemblies remains what it is, the Party will not be able to obtain a majority in the Rajya Sabha for the next few years at least. This can be a serious hurdle.

Mrs Gandhi can legitimately hope for one thing—that the Parties opposing her will once again come to her rescue. If they fight each other bitterly enough in UP and Bihar, they can once again cooperate handsomely to destroy themselves. They have done it before, after all. ■



How the Cabinet was formed

By BARUN SENGUPTA

THERE were few speculative stories this time about the Central Cabinet-making in the daily Press of the capital and there were fewer post-oath-taking "analyses". The reasons are obvious. First, very few really know how Mrs Indira Gandhi selected her colleagues, what were her considerations and how actually the pressure groups worked. Those who know would not like to open their mouths and very few in the Delhi Press have real "contacts" in Mrs Gandhi's camp. Second, the Delhi Press corps is a bit scared these days. Since they could not get anything from the horses' mouths they preferred to keep quiet. Most of them would prefer to avoid speculative political stories concerning Mrs Gandhi before they are sure about the new Government's attitude towards the Press and the Press correspondents. When Mrs Gandhi and her family were in distress, some of us wrote anything and everything about them without caring to verify the facts, and now, when they are back in power some of us are scared to write even the wellknown facts.

The fact that Mr Sanjay Gandhi played an important role in the Cabinet-making process has not been mentioned in any of the 'national' newspapers of the country, though it is wellknown in the capital. The fact that so many of the so-called senior Congress (I) leaders went all the way to 'cultivate' Sanjay and his close friends to get a berth in the Cabinet or an important portfolio has also not been mentioned at all in the 'national' Press. Again, the fact that Mrs Gandhi did not act solely on Sanjay's advice found no place in the national Press. Sanjay's name has seldom been mentioned in the reporting of the formation of the Cabinet.

Today, in Congress (I) politics Sanjay is in a peculiar position. Senior and very senior leaders would go to him and his close friends for favours, would request them to plead their case with Mrs Gandhi and would try to flatter them in every possible way. The same people after coming out of the perimeter of No 12 Willingdon Crescent would go on whispering into the ears of close confidants that 'Sanjay and his friends are interfering too much'.

The other day a very senior Congress (I) MP went to Mrs Gandhi's house with a bouquet and a garland. He offered the bouquet to Mrs Gan-



Sanjay Gandhi

dhi and garlanded Sanjay. He pronounced at the top of his voice: 'Sanjay, it is your victory. It is not our victory'. Before the polls, the same man had proclaimed to all his close associates that Sanjay was ruining his mother's political career. The senior leader who saluted Sanjay after the spectacular victory of the Congress (I) had all along opposed Sanjay's candidature in the election. His argument was that Sanjay's candidature would 'finish our chance of getting a majority'.

Yes, Sanjay had a hand in the formation of the Cabinet as he had a hand in bringing down the Janata Government and forcing the midterm poll. Yes, some of the important Ministers are more close to him than anyone else in the Party and that's their plus point. This is the truth and I don't think one should be afraid of writing this truth. Not that he forced his niother to take some people and exclude others. As I have mentioned earlier, from his experience of the last two and half years, Mrs Gandhi is expected to have more faith in Sanjay's political wisdom than anyone else's. And in the Cabinet formation also I am sure she listened more to Sanjay than anyone else.

Mr Kamalapati Tripathi was keen on getting the prestigious Home Ministry. Mrs Gandhi did not give it to him ultimately. The Home portfolio went to Mr Zail Singh. Was it only because of Sanjay? No. Mrs Gandhi definitely has her own calculations in giving the Home Ministry to the former Chief Minister of Punjab. Some people suggested the name of Mr Barkat Gani Khan Chowdhury for this portfolio. Gani Khan definitely has been personally more close to Sanjay than Zail Singh. But Gani Khan did not get Home. That he would get Irriga-

tion and Energy was settled almost four or five days before the swearing-in ceremony. Why did Home go to Zail Singh? Probably because Mrs Gandhi did not like to give this powerful portfolio to anyone who could aspire to build his own 'political empire' through this Ministry. No one will be able to say that Mr Singh does not have administrative experience. He was a Chief Minister. At the same time, he will be able to claim that he has a strong political base of considerable personality. In his home state Punjab, he is more known as 'Jai Sant' than as 'Jai Singh'.

Mr Stephen was almost sure to be included in the first list of Ministers. The Foreign Ministry was given to Mr. J. N. Sanjay. The Central Intelligence Bureau was given to Mr. J. N. Sanjay.

Mr. J. N. Sanjay was given the Ministry of Information and Public Relations.

Mr. J. N. Sanjay was given the Ministry of Information and Public Relations. He was brought to the Ministry of Information and Public Relations immediately. Mr. J. N. Sanjay was given the Ministry of Information and Public Relations.

Mukherjee's name was not in the list at the last moment. He was brought to a really important position. Mr. Mukherjee's name was there from the very beginning. He was only a Minister of State. He was unwilling to accept that position. Mrs Gandhi called him on the 15th night, talked to him for a while and decided to upgrade him considering the question of Rajya Sabha leadership. His name was deleted from the State Ministers' list, but 'by mistake' was not included in the Cabinet Ministers' list. So, when the names were typed for sending to the Rashtrapati Bhavan, Mukherjee's name was not there. As an important Congress (I) leader said, "It was a typographical mistake". Mrs Gandhi has a special soft corner for Mukherjee, because he was the only former Central Minister from West Bengal who stood by her during the days of distress.

Then came the million-rupee Bahuguna question. Mr Bahuguna wanted a major portfolio from the very beginning. He mentioned Finance first. But Mrs Gandhi had reserved the Finance portfolio for Mr R. Venkataraman as soon as she got the majority. Bahuguna then wanted External Affairs. But that was considered too 'sensitive' for Mr Bahuguna. Mr Bahuguna is ultimately expected to get a prestigious portfolio. But one wonders if his future is very bright in the Congress (I). Mr Vasant Sathe was given the Information and Broadcasting portfolio because Mrs Gandhi wants to build up a rapport with the Press corps, if not the Press barons. If he succeeds, he is sure to get a promotion in the first major reshuffle. It would be good to remember that among those who took oath with Mrs Gandhi as Cabinet Ministers in 1971, less than one-fourth were lucky enough to continue till 1977. ■

Student power fails

Chowgules regain control of Goa college

"THE Chowgule Education Society must remember that education is not an industry", thundered Mohan Das Lollenkar, general secretary of Shrimati Parvatibai Chowgule College, Goa. "One cannot hope to derive momentary gain from it". He was speaking at the annual college day function on March 31, 1979. Denouncing the management for its indifference to student grievances he lashed out at the argument that the language departments, which had been closed, could not be run because they were financially unviable. "If the Chowgules have opened the college for profit then I would advice the Educational Society to hand over the college to either the Government or some other interested party".

The 22-year-old director of the college, Ashok Chowgule, natty mustachioed and handsome, got up livid with rage. He flung his prepared speech aside, and faced an electrified audience in the college library. Throwing down the gauntlet, he challenged Mohan Das to run the college, if he felt himself up to it. Mockingly he priced the college at Rs 80 lakhs and offered it at a discount of 50 per cent to any student buyer.

In July 1979, four months later, it was almost as though the students had decided to take up Ashok Chowgule's challenge. Although discontent with the management had long been seething, all it needed to erupt was a spark. A seemingly innocuous tussle between the teachers and the management served the purpose.

Shrimati Parvatibai College of Arts and Science, established in 1962, is Goa's oldest college. Nestling at the foot of green hills on the outskirts of Margao, its modern grey buildings stand in serene isolation. But like many other Indian colleges it is neck deep in administrative confusion. Although affiliated to Bombay University, its finances are regulated by Goa Government orders. Financially it suffers because of the Union Government's lack of priority in allocating funds for education. The Sixth Plan slashed its allocation for higher education, by 21 per cent, from Rs 337 crores to Rs 265 crores. This cut is greater in terms of the erosion of the rupee and the increase in teachers' salaries. Financially crippled, the colleges either close down or run skeleton services, as in Chowgule College



Chowgule College demonstrators

Bombay University's problem is compounded because a majority of its colleges are run by trusts linked to large industrial houses. As the principal of Dempo College, Goa, put it: "These colleges are part of industrialists' efforts to gain prestige as philanthropists". But they soon fall into neglect and are often run like factories, in narrow terms of profit and loss. The Chowgules, the Dempos, and the Salgaonkars run Goa's most prestigious colleges. Among them, Chowgule's students have always been the leaders of the student body, agitating against fee increases, and for bus concession.

In June 1979, the teachers of Chowgule College began agitating. They had not been fully paid the arrears of the new, raised pay scales introduced after the Emergency. But Goa's teachers were unused to protest. What they thought would be a casual affair of a few days, turned out to be a nightmare. D. J. Malkarneker, the principal, heavy-jowled and perpetually frowning, declared the strike illegal. He read out a message: "The Chowgules know how to deal with strikes and will do so without mercy or compassion. We stand by the principle of 'No work no pay' and we shall not pay for the period of the strike". After a month, on July 20, he announced that show-cause notices would be served on the teachers, and that six of the 'ring leaders' would be dismissed.

Faced with the unrelenting attitude, the teachers dropped their apologetic stance. Their pamphlets became stern, and they hardened their stand. But they were fighting with their backs to the wall. The management went further and deducted 10 days' wages from their July salaries. The strike threatened to go on indefinitely.

Faced with prolonged closure of classes, the students decided they had been bystanders long enough. The language departments were still closed. Lectures for the new term had not started. The management seemed indifferent. A month earlier, the students had sent a memorandum to the college, demanding immediate resumption of classes. Nothing had been done. On July 25, the students gheraoed D. A. Raberero, the acting principal. Raberero pleaded that he himself was on strike. On July 27, Malkarneker handed over a written statement to the students declaring that the situation was beyond his control. The same day, a student delegation trooped to the office of Ashok Chowgule. Chowgule dismissed them arrogantly: "I'm in no position to tell you when lectures will begin", he said. "The classrooms are open. I cannot drag the teachers in. If you are dissatisfied, take your fees back and leave".

Back in the college, 300 furious students assembled in classroom E-3, to hear the account of the meeting with Chowgule. Thumpi, a volatile Tamilian, mounted the podium and roared, "The management has forfeited its right to run this college. This is our college now. We will do whatever we like with it". Students went berserk, breaking notice boards, smashing window panes, and stoning the college. Eventually the student committee managed to bring them under control. A general body meeting was scheduled for the next day. With it, the student takeover of Chowgule College began.

With the students entering the fray, the protest took a drastic turn. Mohan Das Lollenkar and his friends inaugurated the Margao Students' College at 10 am on July 30. Four hundred students ratified the decision to take over the college. What did takeover mean? "From demanding the resumption of classes, we've taken the college into our hands". Early in the morning, some students broke down the terrace door, leaned over the roof and painted the new name of the college over the old one.

Mohan Meakin
Established 1855



*refreshes the parts
others can't reach*

In an impromptu inauguration ceremony for the new college the former principal was gheraoed and booed, and the Chowgules denounced. The last vestige of the Chowgule presence — a sign at the college gate warning off trespassers, put up by the Chowgules Education Society — was thrown into a pond. The new Students Education Society advertised in the papers that classes under the new management would start soon.

The teachers, with whom the trouble began, threw in their lot with the students. The serving of show-cause notices had been a bitter blow. July 31 turned out to be unity day for students and teachers. A morcha of about 1,500 teachers and students paraded about the streets of Margao, demanding nationalisation of the college. Hijacked buses with students on their roofs and bumpers covered the five miles from the college to the Deputy Collector's office in Margao. An effigy of Ashok Chowgule, crowned with a slipper, was burnt; fiery speeches were made, and the Government condemned for its indifference.

Did the students act in support of the teachers? "Frankly, no", says J. Warren Nunes of the Margao Students Committee, an action committee, of 11 students running the college. "We found their demands justified, but how could we trust them to be uncompromising with the management?" A crude form of grass roots democracy prevailed in the daily student general body meetings. About 300 to 400 active students examined, accepted or rejected proposals. Anyone could speak up. Cheers, slogans and desk-thumping signified acceptance. Boos and cat-calls indicated rejection. Classes, conducted by outside teachers, were diligently and seriously attended. Compulsory attendance was abolished, and the students themselves decided the timetables. Special classes were held to discuss education, and to "expose the malpractices of the Chowgules". One of the numerous pamphlets circulated was titled, "We are the management...WE!"

The student administration began thinking of expenses too. Sympathisers donated, and ex-students contributed Rs 100 each, towards administration costs. A student delegation went to Bombay, demanding that the vice-chancellor recognise the Margao Students College, so that the Government grants which subsidised the college's running costs could continue. The vice-chancellor, of course, refused flatly. He also turned down their request to recognise the classes that were being held under the auspices of the student management.

Malkarnekher came to the college on August 8, and was immediately 'requested' to leave. He seemed reluctant, so the students — 900 of them — again requested him to leave. Malkarnekher's reluctance vanished, and he left speedily.

On August 10, the protest took an all-Goa turn, when teachers from all over Goa went on a 'casual strike' in support of Chowgule teachers. This was when the Chowgules got tough. Three students were served show-cause notices, and the teachers were given 72 hours to declare their affiliations. The teachers panicked. Without so much as a consultation with the students, they abandoned the protest, and opted for the Chowgules. With the springboard of the agitation gone, the student takeover of the college collapsed.

Classes under the old management restarted on August 12, with the teachers working "under protest". The management took full advantage of their subjugation, and informed them that they would not be paid for the period June 20 to August 16. The teachers found themselves worse off. Shalini, the local teachers' union representative, peering from behind thick, black-rimmed spectacles, said, "I would just like to forget all about it".

Among the students, ranks, loyalties were divided. A small handful were disillusioned with the students' handling of the situation. But the number loyal to the student cause far outnumbered the pro-management students. Most of these realised their own inherent shortcomings. One says, "We wanted to run the college, and experiment with it for a while. But we were obviously not ready for it. It could not last. We do not want a college run on a profit and loss basis, where education is a commodity. We need external management. But not the Chowgules".

Perhaps the students should have known the limitations of Herbert Marcuse's credo. If they had read the experiences of the French students at Nantiers and Sorbonne in 1968, then they would have hastened slowly.

GURBIR SINGH (SOL), Margao

Strike in Calcutta daily

Was a journalist victimised?

"ON to 1980 With Greater Solidarity"; "We know how to hook a bouncer. Manager, as you are a good bowler, we are good batsmen too". These are some of the slogans plastered all over the walls of the Economic Times office in Calcutta. *Economic Times*—the frontline financial daily of the eastern region of the 'Times' group has been missing from the newsstands for the past two months since the workmen of the Economic Times press and the editorial staff were "forced" to "cease work" because one of their colleagues—a senior sub-editor, R. Padmanabhan, was dismissed by the management.

The "unceremonious dismissal" of R. Padmanabhan as the Calcutta Employees' Union of Bennett, Coleman and Co. Ltd. (CEUBC) terms it came about on a flimsy pretext. The dismissal was "blatantly illegal" and the CEUBC are apprehensive that "working journalists can no more afford to believe that they have secure and fair terms of employment and guaranteed wages and working conditions under the Working Journalists (Conditions of Service and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act. Journalists, particularly sub-editors, can get the sack any moment—for doing their work". The journalists of the *Economic Times* are protesting the dismissal and not one issue of the newspaper has been published since November 18, 1979.

To understand the reasons of what Mr Sivaraman, the manager of the Bennett, Coleman and Co Ltd, Calcutta stated in a notice published in *The Statesman* of December 1,

1979, the "illegal strike/stay-in-strike" one needs to go back to July 1978.

July 23, 1978 was a Sunday when Mr R. Padmanabhan, an experienced sub-editor with more than 12 years in the profession, was officiating as chief sub-editor on the night shift. The chief sub-editor is the only member of the editorial department in a newspaper office who has to have a thorough knowledge of all news items, big or small, which come in during his spell of duty. He also selects the items for publication and decides on which page they should be put. He is responsible for the items which go on page one which is decided at night and can be pulled up for any mistakes on that page. On that night the news editor, Mr B. M. Sahai, walked into the editorial department. Sundays are not working days for the news editor. Neither is the night shift his normal period of duty. Mr Sahai took out some news items which had been found unfit or dated for publication and had consequently not been used. The news items dealt with the bungling in Indian garments export to the USA and the advertisement policy of the DAVP. Mr Sahai told Mr Padmanabhan to use the garments export story on page one in a prominent place. The officiating chief sub-editor told the news Editor that the *Economic Times* had already covered the story a long time back. Mr Sahai insisted that his order should be followed. Mr Padmanabhan along with some of his colleagues took out old issues of the 'ET' and pointed out to Mr Sahai that the news and sube-

quent developments had indeed been covered. Mr Sahai kept on modifying his order and said that at least some parts of the news item should be used. When Mr Padmanabhan asked the news editor to give him written instructions on what was to be done, Mr Sahai refused. Eventually Mr Sahai told Mr Padmanabhan to do what he liked.

This discussion over the news item took more than an hour of the night shift. And time is valuable in the production of a newspaper. This delayed the edition of the daily and Mr Padmanabhan recorded the delay and its reason in a diary which is maintained for the purpose.

After a few days a show cause notice was served on Mr Padmanabhan by the manager of the *Economic Times* Press in Calcutta. The notice alleged that Mr Padmanabhan had defied the news editor's instruction on the use of news items. This interference by the management in the professional day-to-day running of a newspaper upset the journalists. Senior sub-editors of the *Economic Times*, Calcutta, met the manager and told him that editorial affairs could not be treated as matters of discipline. According to the journalists "these were matters of competence". The manager, Mr Sivaraman, assured the journalists that the management had not thought about taking any action and he as manager had only wanted to be aware of the facts of the case since Mr Sahai had made a complaint to him.

The management also met the West Bengal Labour Minister who, according to Mr Sivaraman, is supposed to have said that the West Bengal Government did not believe in sending such disputes for adjudication since they took a long time and labour courts did not settle such matters. After this the Chief Minister, Mr Jyoti Basu spoke to the Bennett Coleman chairman, Mr S. P. Jain, when he was approached by senior journalists to settle the dispute. Sivaraman also says that Mr Basu agreed that Padmanabhan had done something wrong and he deserved some punishment short of dismissal. It was not possible to take Mr Padmanabhan back, said the management.

The stalemate continues since both parties are unwilling to give way. While the livelihood of nearly 4,000 employees is at stake the management has remained immovable. It is worthwhile to note here that the *Economic Times* since it started publication from Calcutta in 1976 has not been a profit making organisation. In 1976-77 and 1977-78 the Calcutta unit incurred a loss of Rs 27 lakhs in each of the financial years. In 1978-79 the loss was Rs 14 lakhs. According to Mr Sivaraman the union was trying to make out a case of the "indisciplined" attitude of Mr Padmanabhan. The union had said that Mr Padmanabhan's offence was a solitary instance. In fact, said the manager, Mr Padmanabhan had been defying the news editor repea-

tedly and Mr Sahai had only made a complaint "when he found R. Padmanabhan incorrigible".

Was the management's decision of dismissal a "disciplinary action"? The CEUBC believes it was not and this was a case of victimisation by the 'Times' management. Mr Padmanabhan has been the secretary of the CEUBC and the disciplinary proceedings which ended in his dismissal were started in July 1978 when the CEUBC was putting pressure on the management for talks on its charter of demands. Mr Padmanabhan was then the union's working president.

Mr Padmanabhan had written a letter to the news editor about his

conduct on July 23, 1978 and explained that his action "was motivated by purely professional considerations". The management is believed to have taken no cognisance of this letter, according to the CEUBC. Further, the editor of the *Economic Times* was kept completely out of the picture during the proceedings against Mr Padmanabhan.

How long this stalemate will continue no one knows. But it is certain that the journalists have united and demonstrated to the management that "it cannot trample on our right with impunity".

TIRTHANKAR GHOSH, Calcutta

NDA turns 25

The tradition stays alive

AMID the gently sloping hills, twenty-two kilometres from Pune railway station, is the National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla, which celebrated its silver jubilee in mid-December. It is a beautifully laid-out complex spread over 7,000 acres of wooded land, testimony to the brilliance of the architect, Mr W. X. Mascarenhas, whose firm belief it was that the academy should be invested with an element of grandeur. The first step towards the foundation of the NDA came after the end of the Second World War, when a committee was set up by the Central Government to discuss the idea of a war memorial to soldiers who had laid down their lives in the conflict. The committee, which was



NDA cadets in training

headed by Field Marshal, Sir Claude Auchinleck, came up instead with the suggestion that a national war academy be established. The idea was accepted immediately, but opinions were divided as to where the academy should be situated. Karachi, Lahore and Dehra Dun were considered but the choice finally fell on Khadakvasla, where Field Marshal Auchinleck himself had once led a military exercise. When finally the Government of Bombay (as it was then) donated the 7,000 acres of land, the issue was resolved

and the final plans for what is now known as the NDA were drawn up.

The foundation stone at Khadakvasla was laid by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while the Academy was raised at Clement Town, Dehra Dun. It was six years later, in January 1955, that the NDA was moved to its permanent location at Khadakvasla. According to the Deputy Commandant of the Academy, Commodore V. S. Shekhawat, an ex-NDA man himself, it was Nehru who made it possible to bypass bureaucratic red tape with respect to funds.

By far the most impressive block in the academy is a huge domed structure with immaculately trimmed lawns and shrubbery. High above the central arch is one word: Sudan. There is an intriguing tale behind this. Two divisions of the Indian Army, the Fourth and the Fiftieth, rendered yeoman service during the liberation of Sudan, following which the Government of Sudan donated the generous sum of a hundred thousand pounds sterling. So there stands at Khadakvasla a wing that is known as Sudan Block, erected in gratitude for the sacrifices made by two divisions of Indian soldiers on foreign shores.

After six semesters at the NDA a cadet gets either a B.Sc or a B.A. degree in conjunction with Jawaharlal Nehru University in addition to service-oriented coordination, which covers a full syllabus of service subjects. But that is not all. The cadets have ample opportunities for recreation as well, with a gymnasium, 16 cricket pitches, 26 basketball courts, an 18-hole golf course, a wonderful stable, a well-equipped sailing club, an Olympic sized swimming pool, 10 squash courts and 10 tennis courts. Two alumni of the NDA, Lt. Col Sengupta and Major Surendra Nath, represented the country in Test cricket, while Major Chimni was the first NDA cadet to don Indian colours at hockey. He led India at the recently concluded World Cup at Kuala Lumpur. Major Raj Manchanda, the current national squash champion is also an ex-NDA officer. NDA talent is not just confined to

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the men it trains either. Two horses at the NDA stables, "Marshall" and "Shahzada" she have been chosen for show jumping at the Moscow Olympics.

The unique nature of the NDA is the concept of inter-service training and co-operation. True to this tradition, the academy is commanded in rotation by a Major General, a rear Admiral and an Air Vice Marshal. (The present Commandant is Vice Marshal, M. J. Dotiwalla, who received the Sword of Honour on his being commissioned in April 1950.) The academy is divided into three battalions (an army concept). Even the NDA uniform is a combination of the inter-service tradition and the NDA

colour, maroon, is a combination of the red of the Indian Army, the Prussian blue of the Indian Navy and the sky blue of the Indian Air Force. The sword in the NDA crest represents the army, the anchor the navy and the eagle the air force.

Twenty-five years ago, at the first passing out parade Jawaharlal Nehru said "Our great nation can advance only if we are united. Our army, our navy and our air force draw their men from all parts of the country and are a symbol of our unity and homogeneity. I wish all of us could imbibe that spirit". He would have been pleased with what he saw if he were alive today.

DAVID McMAHON, Pune

Raipur civil body in limbo

Janata won't let Congress (I) take over

THE Janata Government of Madhya Pradesh succeeded in keeping the Congress (I) out of the Raipur Municipal Corporation during the Lok Sabha mid-term poll in spite of its getting a clear majority in the corporation polls held on December 31, 1978. The Congress (I) in its last bid to take control of the corporation, locked up its offices on December 3 and 4, 1979 and did not allow any normal work to be done. But to no purpose.

The results of the elections to the Raipur Municipal Corporation were announced by January 3, 1979. An advocate of Raipur had filed a writ in the High Court towards the end of December 1978 praying for a stay of the elections. The plea was that though the MP Corporation Act provided 30 days for raising objections to names in the voters' list,

the programme for the Raipur civic polls had allowed only 20 days. The High Court did not stay the elections but prohibited notification of the election results in the MP Gazette. The High Court later also allowed cooption to the 44-member corporation but continued its stay on the notification of results.

When High Court finally dismissed the petition, the Supreme Court admitted an appeal against the High Court's orders and granted a stay. But it also dismissed the appeal in the first week of September 1979. The Congress (I), which had gained a majority in the corporation, both in the elections and cooption, has ever since been trying for notification of the results. The Congress (I) has made specific charges that the Janata Party, which had miserably lost the elections, and some of the

officials of the corporation facing corruption charges had financed the petition and this unholy alliance was behind the delay in notification.

The Congress (I) corporators met Chief Minister, V. K. Saklecha, Local Government Minister, Ramanand Singh, one and all VIPs and everyone assured prompt publication of the notification. But nothing happened. The frustrated Congress (I) corporators and Congress (I) workers started a relay hunger-strike from November 26 and within a week gave it a wild colour. On December 1 they prevented the entry of the administrator, health officer and chief architect and on December 3 and 4 they picketed before the main gate and locked up the doors of some of the corporation offices to stop work.

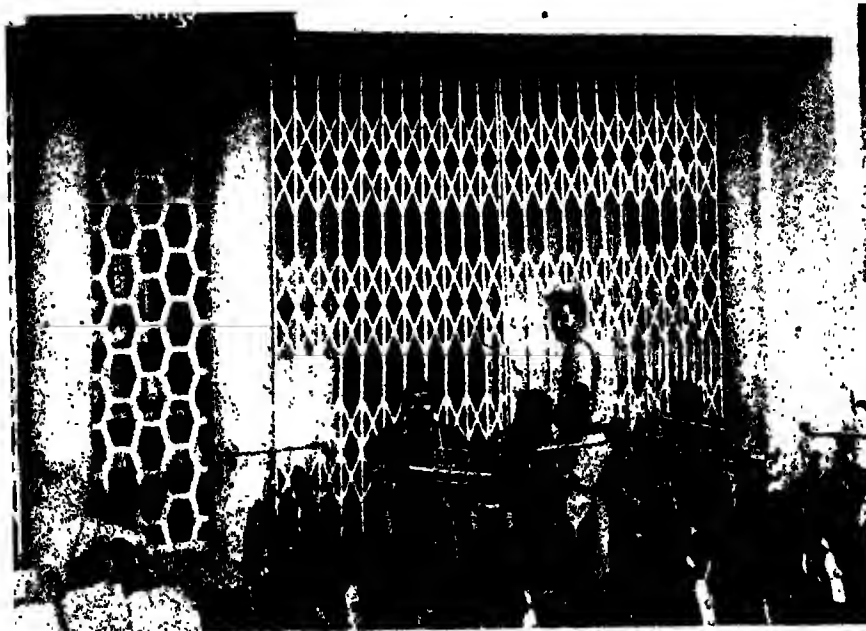
The State Government had an excuse. Charan Lal Sahu, an advocate from Raipur practising in the Supreme Court and counsel for the petition had served a notice to the State Government that his client had applied to the Supreme Court for referring its judgment (dismissing his petition) to the Constitution bench. The notice said that the Supreme Court had directed his client to deposit Rs 2,000 within two months for consideration of his application. Sahu said in his notice that the matter was under judicial process and any publication of the notification of the election results would only amount to contempt of court.

The Collector of Raipur assured the Congress (I) corporators that the State Government would publish the notification by December 15 if there was no legal bar. Local Government Minister, Ramanand Singh asked the law secretariat to give their opinion in the matter on this issue immediately. The file was sent to the Law Ministry a month back but it sat on it and finally returned the file with the remark that it could not give any opinion. The State Government then referred the matter to the standing counsel of the Supreme Court for his opinion.

The Congress (I) corporators thought it better to call off their agitation and protest programmes since it was already too late. They were convinced that even if the State Government published the notification, it would be too late since the commissioner could take up to 30 days to convene the first meeting and that would go beyond the mid-term polls.

The last elections to Raipur Municipal Council were held in January 1957. There were no elections thereafter and the municipal council was upgraded into a municipal corporation in 1967. The All India Mayors' conference had expressed its serious concern over the denial of an elected body to the Raipur Municipal Corporation but all the State Chief Ministers, Govind Narayan Singh of the SVD Government, S. C. Shukla, P. C. Sethi and again S. C. Shukla of the Congress and D. P. Mishra avoided elections to the Raipur Municipal Corporation.

M. V. KHER, Raipur



Locked gates of Raipur Municipal Corporation

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Nehru : great leader

In these exclusive extracts from "India, China and Indochina" (Allied Publishers Pvt Ltd,) T. N. KAUL the veteran diplomat surveys the transformation of the Indian scene and highlights the present uncertainties.

MY first meeting with Nehru was in 1933, when as leader of the Allahabad University Debating Team I presented the visiting British Universities' Debating Team to him at his residence, Anand Bhavan, in Allahabad. Nehru talked to us as if he were among his colleagues, made us feel at home, and entertained us to tea. He always felt at ease with the younger generation, and so did the latter with him. Alas! he did not translate this into action by including younger people in his Cabinet when he became the Prime Minister. He had too much regard for his old colleagues who had been with him through India's struggle for freedom to overlook their claims. Many younger people in the Congress Party who subscribed to his ideology felt discouraged and formed a socialist wing of the Party.

One Sunday morning, in the summer of 1956, finding him relatively free, I walked into his office in South Block with some papers. After he had given his orders on the files, I asked Nehru, "Sir, may I take the liberty of asking a question?" He said, "Go ahead, what is it?" I spoke a bit hesitantly and said, "Many socialists in your Party are feeling that you are blocking their way and not giving them a lead nor letting them take it on their own. Is that true?" He looked at me sharply and flared up, "Why should they depend upon me? I am not stopping them. If they have the guts and the following they should make their views felt. Looking up to me for a lead only exposes their weak base". He had in 1951-52 offered three seats in his Cabinet to Jayaprakash Narayan and his socialist colleagues, but the latter had refused the offer. They wanted five seats, but Nehru did not consider the demand justified in view of their limited following in the Party. Also, he did not want to ignore his older colleagues.

Having provoked Nehru (for that was the quickest way to register on his sensitive and sharp mind), I asked further, "Sir, some people say that you are putting in key positions of power and authority people who do not subscribe to your policy and programme and who are, in fact, sabotaging it. Is that so?" He softened a little, became reflective, and then said, "Remember, young



man, I have to carry with me 400 million people who are mostly conservative, superstitious, and caste-ridden. Those who believe in my ideas will always be with me. It is the others—they are the vast majority—that I have to carry with me".

When I visited Kuala Lumpur in 1968, Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rehman related an anecdote that is relevant in this context. He was the President of the Malayan Sports Federation. Two Malays of Indian origin heckled him at a meeting. He raised his hands in despair and said, "I sympathise with Pandit Nehru!" When the two asked him what Nehru had to do with the subject under discussion, he replied "I cannot satisfy two Indians in this gathering. So, I can imagine the problems that Nehru has to face to satisfy 400 million Indians!" The audience laughed away the issue.

Nehru had great ideas, but sometimes he would choose the wrong tools and instruments that did not fit into his ideas. This was, perhaps, Nehru's major weakness. He laid the foundation for modern India, but he could also have built a superstructure that could have weathered the many storms that came later, from 1962 onwards. Perhaps, he had grown mellow with age or was too much of a democrat at heart to believe in thrusting his ideas from above, and therefore wanted them to grow and develop from the grass-roots level. He could not achieve some of his goals, though he came very near them, because he was not a ruthless administrator. He was a great leader, but a poor organiser. He could have built a great political Party with a trained cadre base and also a second line of leadership. He had too much faith in the democra-

tic process to interfere with its slow and lethargic way of tackling urgent and imminent problems facing India.

I recall another occasion in the summer of 1956 when we were holding a Heads of Mission Conference in Delhi. Nehru attended most of its sessions. On the penultimate day some of my junior colleagues and I discussed among ourselves and prepared a two-page note to be sent to Nehru requesting him to enlighten us on some of the questions troubling our minds. My colleagues would not sign the note for fear of rousing the suspicion and the resentment of our senior colleagues. I took the risk, signed it, marked it "personal", and sent it to the Prime Minister's House in the evening.

Next day, while addressing the concluding session of the Conference, Nehru took out the paper from his pocket, read it out without mentioning my name, and answered the questions in a calm and confident tone. Some of the questions and answers are as given below:

Q: What efforts are being made to train the second line of leadership?

A: It is true that the front rank of Indian leadership are getting old, but they still have the halo of the freedom struggle around them which the second line lack. In a democracy, the right people are thrown up by the democratic process. There is, therefore, no need for me to push them up.

Q: What is meant by "socialist pattern of society"? Does it involve socialisation of agriculture, industry, education, etc?

A: India cannot afford to indulge in slogans. Socialism cannot be brought about merely by shouting. We must be able to carry the mass of the people with us in whatever we want to do. They are mostly illiterate, orthodox, conservative, caste-conscious, and religion-ridden. Yes, we want ultimately to bring some sort of socialisation in agriculture, industry, education etc. But we have to first prepare the ground for it, suited to our peculiar conditions. Agrarian, social and educational reforms are necessary. But mere legislation is not enough. For instance, our educational system is wholly unsuited to our present needs. Many Commissions were set up and they submitted voluminous reports, but nothing has come of them. We have, therefore, to pass legislation, educate

public opinion, and implement our policies; and all this takes time.

Here was Nehru the idealist and the revolutionary talking as a pragmatic, practical politician, whose zeal, enthusiasm, and impatience had been tempered by ten years of prime ministership.



On another occasion, I raised some questions relating to China and the north-eastern border and asked Nehru: "Sir, you are the Prime Minister of India as well as the Congress President. Why can't you instill some wisdom into the State Governments and your Party in the States to implement the urgently needed administrative, agrarian, and other reforms?"

He was listening patiently, and feeling encouraged I added, "If you don't do it, no one else can, now or in the foreseeable future. You will be leaving an unfortunate legacy to the posterity if you don't do something right now."

Suddenly Nehru got up from his chair, and, pacing the room, said: "Young man, you don't understand, I am not a dictator. I can't thrust solutions down the throats of my Party or of the Governments in the States. Dictatorial solutions don't last or endure. I have to deal with and through the tools and the instruments that democracy throws up."

And yet when he wanted a thing done he had his way. I was once summoned to a Cabinet meeting in the summer of 1954-55 when they were discussing some issues concerning Nepal and the northern borders. I was asked a few questions and I answered them with the help of maps I had carried with me. Nehru seemed satisfied, but some of his colleagues asked me more questions and started to argue among themselves. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai agreed with my analysis while Katju did not. I listened to the arguments among themselves and watched Nehru quietly dictating the Cabinet's decision to his Secretary without joining the wrangle that was going on between Katju and Kidwai. When Nehru read out his summing up, every one agreed with his formulation.

Such was Nehru's method and manner of dealing with his colleagues. He encouraged them to express their views, sensed and formulated a consensus decision which no one challenged because while it represented Nehru's own conclusion, it was based on all other points of view. They expressed their individual views but accepted Nehru's decision, even if it were at variance with their views. Nehru made them feel a sense of participation and they never felt that he was dictating to them. Most of them had been comrades-in-arms in India's struggle for freedom during which Nehru had played a prominent and leading role, next only to Gandhi's. There was a spirit of camaraderie and willingness among them to go by consensus as formulated by

Nehru after a full discussion with his colleagues.

Nehru had the wisdom and the statesmanship to sense the mood of the country and the world, and feel the pulse of his own people. Though firm on principles he was willing to compromise on details in deference to his colleagues' views. They respected him and gave him their total loyalty and unstinted support because they knew that the country and the people were with him. They were not small-town politicians but men of stature and leaders in their own right — stalwarts such as Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, Gobind Ballabh Pant, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Lal Bahadur Shastri, and others.

But they did little to train up the second line of leadership or a trained cadre of workers, with the result that after Nehru the Congress Party began to show signs of disintegration. Lal Bahadur Shastri tried to carry forward Nehru's policies but lived for too short a time to save the Party from the rot that was setting in. Indira Gandhi represented the new and the younger generation. After some initial hesitation she showed signs of becoming a strong leader, but unlike her father, she wanted a homogeneous Party and not an amorphous conglomerate. The 1969 split in the Party raised hopes of a polarisation based on ideology. The liberation of Bangladesh and the defeat of Pakistan in 1971 held promise of a strong, united, progressive India making her position felt and respected abroad and her policies effectively implemented within the country — but only for a while.

The rot inside the Party had already set in. Authoritarian tendencies developed; flattery and sycophancy were at a premium; independence of judgment or advice was frowned upon; economic and social difficulties increased; political instability and insecurity loomed large; the destructive tactics of a frustrated Opposition made matters worse. Emergency was proclaimed and its prolongation led to increased suffering and estrangement of the people.

The March 1977 election results revived the people's hope and faith in democracy. The restoration of the freedom of the Press, of expression, and of assembly was welcomed. But on the social and the economic fronts, the Janata conglomerate proved unable to deliver the goods. Two and a half years of Janata Party rule failed to fulfil the people's hopes and the electoral promises the Party made. Internal contradictions and dissensions among the constituents of the Janata Party forced Morarji Desai to resign and led to the break-up of the Party as quickly as it was formed. Fissures appeared not only in the new ruling "caretaker coalition" but also in and between the various Congress Parties and the regional groupings. The Leftists are divided and, in spite of declarations of "Left unity", little

progress in that direction is visible, so far. There does not as yet seem to be any alternative emerging that could give direction and a strong stable, honest, and efficient government at the Centre. Perhaps we are going through the throes of a period of transition, as China is. But with a difference. China has a one-Party system and notwithstanding the changes that occur in the Central leadership the same Party rules in Peking and in the Provinces. Unlike in China, in India there are several Parties and their coalitions ruling at the Centre and in several States: regional Parties as the AIADMK, the Akali Dal, and the National Conference and the Jana Sangh or the BLD-led Governments rule in some States, apart from peculiar combinations in the north-eastern hill States.

The people are disgusted with the politicians. They are angry at the mess left behind by the Janata Party in the economic, social, political, and security fields. There seems to be an anti-Janata feeling, as there was, for very different reasons, an anti-Congress wave in March 1977. A "new" India seems to be emerging out of the chaos.



There was little consistency in the attitude of the Janata Government to similar problems in different parts of the world. Their recognition of the new Government in Uganda and their hesitation to do the same in case of Kampuchea is an instance in point. Contradictory statements were made on our nuclear policy which created confusion and proved detrimental to our national interests. Ill-considered and ill-advised statements on the liberation of Goa and the merger of Sikkim are cases in point. New phrases such as "genuine" and "proper" nonalignment were coined only to create doubts in the minds of many in our own country as well as abroad. Tall claims were made about improving our relations with the USA, China, Pakistan, and other countries without much substance in them. It would have been much better had our leaders said nothing at all until they had achieved something rather than made high-sounding but empty statements which not only do not carry conviction but may even embarrass the future governments and harm our national interests.

Such is the situation in India today. What would it be like tomorrow? The immediate future seems uncertain, but there is the hope that a fresh verdict of the people in January 1980 may correct some of the wrong trends and re-create an atmosphere of confidence under an effective, efficient, and honest Government at the Centre.

Our foreign policy must regain the resilience of Jawaharlal Nehru's historic outlines and restore the basic principles formulated by him which enabled India to play a significant role in international affairs. ■

A Marxist who understood the Indian situation

BRAHMANAND remembers Acharya Narendra Deva

A GLORIOUS era of dedicated freedom fighters and social thinkers has come to an end. There is a serious and complete void. Acharya Narendra Deva, who was one of them, died only a few years after India attained Independence. Yusuf Meherally, another stalwart, could not even see free India's polity taking shape. The last among them was Jayaprakash Narayan; he too passed away in October last year, a bare two years after his historic achievement in 1977. Such geniuses are rare in history. They were thinkers, visionaries and activists, all rolled into one. They were dedicated to the cause and they laid down their lives in the struggle for a new India.

Narendra Deva was a Marxist and he remained a Marxist till his death. His conviction on Marxism was unflinching. But he never allowed himself to be a pawn in the game of power politics. Perhaps this was the reason why his Marxism remained undiluted and genuine. He differed from the prophets of the Indian Communist Party on several basic issues.

At the beginning, when Gandhi had launched his first civil disobedience movement, Indian communists had described the Congress as a "mass organisation of the Indian bourgeois" and "Gandhism" as the "right wing of the bourgeois ideology". As a result, the communists alienated themselves from the historic national movement for liberation. Though Narendra Deva was a Marxist, he did not subscribe to the views of the communists. In his presidential speech at the conference of the All-India Congress Socialist Party as early as on May 17, 1934, he said: "We do not wish to isolate ourselves from the great national movement against British Imperialism which the Congress symbolises". He knew that the Congress had defects and shortcomings. Nor could it easily become a great revolutionary force in the country. He also conceded that the Indian struggle was only a bourgeois democratic revolution. Yet, he thought that it would be a suicidal policy for Marxists to cut themselves off from the national movement. But the communists went on making one mistake after another.

His Marxism had another equally important dimension. He was familiar with the realities and the problems of India — both in their intensity and enormity. For example, poverty. Has it not been the biggest and the most serious problem in this country? He was in search of a social philosophy for resolving these problems. Though Marxism provided him an answer to his quest, he could not agree with Indian communists who were working as "chariot-wheels of Soviet Russia". There were natural differences between him and the communists.

He had another formidable problem before him. The highest echelons of the Congress raised a controversy that socialism could grow only where capitalism had developed. So the conditions in India were not suited to socialism. "What are the reasons to believe that Indian conditions can never be ripe for socialism, so long as the country remains a predominantly agricultural country?" he asked. According to him, a distinction was to be made between the growth of nationalism in India and the western countries. Nationalism, he pointed out, might coincide with the growth of capitalism in western countries. But this was not true as far as India was concerned. In India, nationalism had grown out of the people's urge for emancipation from starvation and poverty. But both the Congress leaders and the communists were playing different tunes. They had their own axes to grind.

Narendra Deva was engaged in a two-pronged fight—against the Congress leaders and the communists. The Congress leadership fought shy of undertaking any mass struggle. They believed in the politics of expediency rather than in the technique of mass struggles. It was natural and inevitable. For the Congress suffered from its own contradictions. In order to ward off any programme of struggle Congress leaders raised a bogey against class war and violence. In his letter to Nehru of December 10 1937, Narendra Deva wrote: "Truth and non-violence are noble ideas and as such every decent man must have high regard for them. But I feel that they are so much being misused today in India that the day is not far distant when they will begin to stink

in our nostrils. It is extremely vulgar to press them in the service of a wrong cause or to use them light-heartedly for an ulterior objective. But that is exactly what is happening today. The expression is just now on the lips of every minister—who has to defend a weak case or who wants to confuse the public mind on any issue or who wants to justify a course of action which (is) in direct opposition to the declared policy of the Congress".

How could the Congress leaders take this risk? The leadership in the Congress had come mainly from the "upper classes" and therefore its "social basis" was very narrow. They felt stronger by entertaining "the belief that they are acting in the interests of society as a whole". But this was not a fact. Whenever there was an attack on their social prerogatives and privileges, they all combined in repelling it. Any mass struggle forged a new leadership. Narendra Deva, therefore, found that in such a situation "the oppressed class, who have to win power cannot afford to be consciously altruistic and they need to be class-conscious because without developing a sense of class-solidarity, it is not possible for them to have an effective organisation which alone can win power from them".

He therefore pleaded for the broadening of the social base of the Congress by enlisting the support of toiling labour. For he said: "The masses are the class of the future". He had also warned: "The remedy lies not in narrowing the basis still further but in broadening it and finding a new equation which will eradicate the deep causes that lie at the door". For, democracy, he said, "does not depend only on the spirit but also on the form of organisation through which it functions".

He was, however, remorseful that for some time past, the Congress had turned authoritarian. But he did not overlook the importance of the individual. He found that in the modern age, the emphasis had shifted from the individual to the organisation and the collectivist bias was predominant. He felt that such a trend might lead to the curtailment of democracy and to the imperceptible development of totalitarian tendencies. "In the name of discipline and solidarity", he said,

"let us not have an exclusive and loose organisation, which may become in future a vehicle of totalitarian power politics". What he apprehended has come true.

AFTER India became independent Congress leaders preferred to depend upon the Government to strengthen democracy rather than allow full play to the democratic aspirations of the people. It is a tragedy that even after the events of 1975 they could not become wiser.

"What is the Congress today?" he asked. "There is partisanship and grouping within the Congress. It is an organisation divided against itself. A mad race for power, office and money has taken the place of selfless service". He was worried that power politics had brought ruin to this country. The struggle for power had started long back. It was first dormant but when the country became independent, it became open.

Soon after Gandhi's assassination, the Congress adopted a new amendment to the Constitution of the Party prohibiting socialists from functioning as a group within the organisation. An ideological group like the Congress Socialist Party was banned. But political groups were formed on the basis of castes. For a moment Narendra Deva was in a fix. Did the caste groups represent the struggle of the disinherited and the oppressed against privileges and wealth? He thought that this might be an "inevitable stage" or "a temporary phase" in India's politics. But on the contrary, it ignited the fire of casteism and soon became a serious threat to India's integrity. Now after 30 years of Independence, the situation is still getting worse. Caste alliance has become the rule of the day. Even the communists have now joined in the fray. Narendra Deva had warned about this long back. He had realised its danger then and was trying to provide a class content to caste conflicts.

He had also pointed out another serious danger in Indian politics. He was convinced that politics might not be sustained without a moral base. Why have there been large scale defections in the country? It is the result of a total eclipse of morality in politics. Narendra Deva had sensed this danger and he had himself taken steps against it in his life. He was a member of the State Assembly in UP. He resigned from the UP Assembly on March 31, 1948 following the decision of the socialists to quit the Indian National Congress. As he had been elected to the Assembly as a Congress nominee, he sought a fresh mandate from the electorate. In his letter, he wrote:

"We are leaving our home with a grieving heart. But we are not doing away with our ancestral inheritance. This is not a material inheritance but it is an inheritance of ideals and sacred principles. The successor to this property is never the eldest son,

nor is it equally divided. The personal law of the religious communities does not apply to it. As a matter of fact, the genuine claimants to this property or inheritance can only be those who prove themselves worthy of this property through their faith and conduct. There is no false pride in it. We are aware of our limitations and we are also fully conscious of our imperfections. Nevertheless, we wish to assert that we shall do our best to prove ourselves worthy claimants of it.

"The history of British Parliament and of the legislature elsewhere shows that often on such occasions people do not resign their place. We



Acharya Narendra Dev

could also cross the floor and sit on the other side if only we wanted it. But we did not think it proper to do so. It is possible that with your blessings we may be able to build a little home for ourselves somewhere in a corner of this vast House. Whether this wish is fulfilled or not, we shall never depart from our principles. We do constructive work and not destruction. Hence our criticism will always be directed to this end. We shall always shrink from personal attacks, nor shall we indulge in personal controversies. We want to extend our hand of cooperation towards the establishment of a healthy political life. In these matters the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi would always guide us".

He was equally critical of the role of the Communist Party. He found that this Party was ridden with "intrigues", "double dealings", "rank opportunism" and "total disregard of moral considerations in its dealings with others". Nor did he regard the Communist Party in India as "a party of extreme left". For him, the party of the extreme left is "that which applies the wisdom and the courage to advocate and introduce revolutionary changes in society to secure

social justice and equality".

Nevertheless, Narendra Deva did not reject Marxism as such. There is nothing wrong in its philosophy. He was a great defender of Marxism. In fact, he set Marxism in the right perspective for the situation in India. He underlined the importance of "the method of a political party", for, he considered that both ends and means are interwoven and cannot be separated from each other. But he regretted that "the tendency of the present age is to sacrifice intellectual independence, individual freedom and even moral principles to power politics. The moral level has gone low and every action is justified in the name of realism".

He believed that Marx had developed a philosophy in answer to the problems which grew out of the feudal and capitalist stages of human evolution as it had dehumanised and depersonalised the individual. He had pinned his faith in the proletarian revolution for restoring to man his lost integrity. For the proletariat, according to Marx, was the representative of humanity and his victory would be the triumph of the idea of humanity. To the critics of "the materialistic conception of history", his argument was equally strong. He was convinced that Marx had recognised the "supremacy" of both matter as well as the idea. But Marx seemed to be right that "an idea can influence the course of history only when it realises itself in fact, and thus becomes a thing".

If socialism is more a practice than a theory, Narendra Deva had followed it in his own life. He made no distinction for himself. He had a tremendous capacity to suffer. He had no grievance ever in his life. His life was a saga of suffering and sacrifice. He knew that he did not keep good health. In 1941, he was just released from jail and came to Lucknow from his native town Faizabad, for convalescence. He was again arrested. This time his imprisonment had completely wrecked his health. Yet he remained undaunted. After his release, he persuaded Gandhi to launch another movement for India's freedom. He was prepared to risk his life. Gandhi, however, appointed him his nominee, among a galaxy of leaders like Nehru, to prepare for the struggle in UP.

How simple his life was! He was the vice-chancellor of Lucknow University. The Chief Minister of the most populous state of UP, Govind Ballabh Pant, came to see him. After he went back, his wife said: "Why don't you ask Pant to fix up some job for your son?" His face reddened with anger. He replied: "You have said it this time. But you will not repeat it again. Nor will you use my name for getting a job for your son". He was ruthless to his wife. He did not compromise his principles for a petty job for his son. Indeed, he was the tallest among the tall. There is none like him to lead this country today.



The spectre of energy famine stalks the world, and non-oil producing third world countries are the worst hit. BIKASH SINHA examines the alternative open to us in fulfilling our dreams of prosperity.

THE most devastating event of the Seventies is the quadrupling of oil prices in the fall of 1973 — a rude shock to the world. But the price increase was not entirely unjustified. From 1950 to 1973 the price of oil in terms of real value has declined steadily. Clearly the world's oil reserves would have dwindled at a rather alarming rate had there been no check on the galloping magnitude of global oil consumption. The industrial nations of the world, since the early months of 1974 have been looking persistently into the possibilities of becoming independent of the Middle East.

Overnight, a new concept took high priority in the jargon of international socio-economic vocabulary — 'Alternative Energy'. A swift change in political equations enveloped the Western industrialised powers; those who have no oil, like Germany, France and Switzerland, out of necessity had to woo the desert kings of Arabia for whatever favours they could get.

In India, the main sources of energy for the generation of electricity are oil, hydel, coal and nuclear fission. Among these, oil-fired power stations contribute less than 1 per cent of the total installed capacity. A total of 14,100,000 tonnes of crude are imported, the bulk of the import coming from Iraq — for which the total bill is a staggering Rs 420 crores in 1979. The general trend in the world suggests without any doubt whatever, that there is very little chance of an oil-fired power station coming into operation in India. Transportation is almost wholly dependent on oil petrochemical industries, fertilizers, etc., requires petroleum. The Government, in spite of indigenous production in Assam and at Bombay High finds it hard to foot the import bill of oil for the meagre 1 per cent of our total power consumption—the use of oil for large-scale production of electricity can, therefore, be completely ruled out in this country.

Although oil consumption in India has hardly gone up since 1971, the obvious fact remains that we cannot shield our economy from the escalating price of oil, consumed in vast portions throughout the Western industrialised nations. Every item imported, is going to cost that much more.

The sources of power generation in India are twofold. The first of these is hydro-electric potential. In a country as big and as poor as India, utilisation of hydrostations for the generation of electricity is the best from many points of views — simplicity in design, easy uncomplicated maintenance, absence of pollution and a zero fuelling cost. The total hydro-electric potential of India, however, is limited — the estimate is 41,000 Mw. But the energy available from these sites will amount to only 221 billion Kwh per year, which is equivalent to an installed capacity of 25,000 Mw. Out of the total available hydel potential only 16 per cent has been exploited so far, which is about

40 per cent of the total installed capacity. Although the total power generated in India has increased from 6,383 Mw in 1970-71 to 9,975 in 1977-78, the percentage of the total power consumed in hydrostatic form has remained around 40 per cent. This goes to show the emphasis has been shifted to other forms of power-generation.

THERE is a lot more work necessary to utilise the total hydro-electric potential of this country — the only snag is, however, that the hydel power stations are expensive and take a rather long time to be commissioned. The gestation period could be crucial for the break the industry might require at the time. The Koyna Extension and Idikki took nine years to complete; the Dehar project, on the other hand took eleven years. The recurring shortfalls between the targets and the actual augmentation of India's hydel power programme has increased, on an average, from 15 per cent in the First Plan to about 50 per cent in the Fourth Plan. The escalating price of raw materials tends to indicate an increase of Rs 2,000/Kwe over the last ten years.

With the most pessimistic growth rate in India and the most optimistic utilisation of hydel potential it is almost certain that by the year 1995 the hydel potential would be totally exhausted. The distribution of hydel sources is such that the main industrial centres of the country, long before that time, will turn dry of power.

The second source of power generation is coal. Coal deposits in India are considerable. Reserves of coal in India total well over 80 billion tonnes, of which only 21 billion tonnes are in the form of proved reserves, the rest being equally divided between indicated reserves or inferred reserves. Of the 21 billion tonnes of proved reserves, about 80 per cent has an ash content of more than 20 per cent.

The annual production of coal in India is about 90,000,000 tonnes per annum, one-third of which is used for production of electricity in the form of thermal stations, which accounts for about 55 per cent of our total production. More than half of the total coal reserves are in the eastern belt around Bengal and Bihar. This uneven distribution necessitates large-scale transportation from one corner of the country to the other. The sweeping power crisis that reduced Calcutta to a city of darkness and brought Bombay to the verge of an industrial calamity was partly due to the problem of transportation of coal from a coal city like Dhanbad in Bihar to an industrial town like Nasik in Maharashtra. Inefficiency and massive corruption forced the coal reserves of Nasik to dwindle to a mere half-day's stock in April 1979. Lack of adequate wagons, according to the Railway Ministry, is the real reason. The Energy Ministry blames the Railway Ministry and the Railway Ministry blames Coal India Ltd. It is a classic case of buck-passing,

TABLE I

List of major thermal power plants in India: Capacity >250 mw. Badarpur (500), Bandel (350), Bhatinda (440), Bokaro (400), Chandrapur (545), Dhuvaran (530), Durgapur (290), Harduaganj (300), Koradi (480), Obra (1550), Nasik (280), Neyveli (600), Ramagundam (500), Santaldih (480), Trombay (250), Tutukhat (400), Nasik Extension (420), Singrauli (1510), Tuticorin (210) and Wanakobri (630)

where nobody in New Delhi wants to share the blame for the scandal. The industries suffered, ordinary citizens of Calcutta sweated it out with unparalleled patience and suddenly the Government was liquidated.

A cursory glance at the history of power development in this country would suggest that there has been an over-emphasis on the thermal power stations and a gradual shift from an efficient utilisation of hydel power. Even with the huge coal reserves of today we are poised for a crash with regard to our thermal power programme simply because transportation and the management of coal supply has become an impossible task for our authorities. To add to the problems, most Indian thermal stations are not designed to run on coal with large ash content; so the obvious consequence of using low grade coal is frequent breakdown of equipment leading to prolonged power failure. A good measure of the problems at Santaldih and Bandel thermal stations near Calcutta is the mismatch between the specified quality of coal and the coal actually used. The latter actually has a very large ash content. Poor maintenance and political gymnastics complicate the issue further.

Any problem relating to power is immediately linked with the problem of adequate supply in order to meet the demand. Any large-scale industrial expansion is out of the question simply because of the power requirements entailed by such a move. We do not seem to have any other alternative now but to pursue vigorously a crash programme of installing power generators on a large scale. To sustain that growth we will have to increase our coal output ten times over, besides planning for the complex problem of transportation — an almost impossible task!

TABLE II

Energy potential from coal and nuclear fuels.	
Fuel	Energy Kwh
Coal	160×10 ¹²
Uranium in thermal reactors	7.2×10 ¹²
Uranium in fast reactors	208×10 ¹²
Thorium in fast reactors	1280×10 ¹²

And what is going to be our source of power? We have seen that hydel and thermal power stations would not be adequate to meet our demand. That leaves us with three alternatives (i) solar power (ii) fusion reactors (iii) fission reactors. There has been much talk all over the world with regard to the first alternative. Solar power is the most fashionable alternative source of energy now, the simplest and the safest. The ecologists are ecstatic, the politicians are excited. Much has also been said about the third possibility stories about the horrors and calamities associated with nuclear fission reactors have reached out from one corner of the globe to others. The rise and fall of Governments in certain countries has also been linked with the fallout of the nuclear reactor programme.

Once all the possibilities with regard to large-scale power production in our country have been scrutinised, the most viable alternative has to be nuclear fission technology. With a view to power requirements in the Eighties and the Nineties, there appears to be no other alternative but to opt for nuclear reactor technology.

Today nuclear power in India accounts for only 2.5 per cent of the total output and that too is mostly due to the grace of the US Government. Without the necessary enriched uranium for Tarapur this figure could easily drop to even one per cent. It is interesting to note that in the United States, with all the moral overtures of Jimmy Carter, the installed nuclear power capacity is 53,500 Mw, more than 12 per cent of the country's total consumption. Plants to generate an additional 137,000 Mw of nuclear power are already in order and even if some of the orders are cancelled there will still be a massive addition. In West Germany and Japan, nuclear energy meets 12 per cent of the total consumption whereas in Britain nuclear power accounts for 14 per cent of the total consumption. Arguments from ecologists are not going to deter either Jimmy Carter or Margaret Thatcher from implementing ambitious nuclear programmes for the next decade. Rhetoric at international forums, pressurisation of the Third World countries to clamp down on the nuclear power programme is one stance but the US campaign for swift expansion of the nuclear power programme is quite another. It is incredible that in the teeth of anti-nuclear lobby President Giscard of France has made contingency plans to increase the nuclear installation to meet more than half of the total power demands in France by 1985. But France of course has always been fiercely independent in her nuclear programme.

In India, the uranium resources total about 52,000 tonnes while thorium stocks come to 320,000 tonnes. In comparison with our coal resources 52,000 tonnes of uranium sounds truly miniscule. The energy potential of uranium however is much

larger for uranium fuels. As is well known, uranium occurring in nature has U-235 and U-238. Most thermal reactors working with slow neutrons can burn only U-235 which contains just about 0.7 per cent of the total uranium. It is fortunate that in nuclear fission reactions, a part of the neutrons released, can be used again to convert the more abundant U-238, which is not fissile, to Pu-239 which is excellent fissile material. However, it must be admitted that the process is rather slow.

In Fast Breeder reactors, on the other hand, the conversion of the fertile material is extremely efficient where for every fissile atom destroyed, about 1.2 to 1.5 new fissile atoms are produced. This implies, at least theoretically that practically all the uranium can be burnt to produce power. In Breeder systems, thorium can also be used to breed U-233 which can be good nuclear fuel. In all these cases one is dependent on the chemical reprocessing plant, which reprocesses and refabricates the plutonium or U-233 produced respectively. It should be pointed out that thorium and uranium are practically useless materials anywhere but inside the reactors — considering the deposits in our country it is the ideal material to burn away.

THE cost benefit of the capital investment on nuclear power plants, it is widely believed, is quite unprofitable compared with hydel or thermal power stations. The capital investment re-

TABLE III
Cost effectiveness in power plants

Coal fired	Ru/Kwh
1. Thermal station	4,500
2. Coal mines	750
3. Coal transportation	1,000
Total	6,250
Nuclear	Ru/Kwh
1. Power station	5,300
2. Heavy water plants	495
3. Uranium exploration	85
4. Uranium mining	295
5. Fuel fabrication	185
6. Fuel reprocessing	135
Total	6,175

quired for the installation of nuclear power stations is considerably higher than what is required for the conventional sources of power. But a substantial portion of the initial investment goes to develop associated sectors like production of heavy water and setting up of facilities required in the fuel cycle activities.

In the thermal power stations, on the other hand, the investment required to develop coal mines, transportation, railway wagons etc is not usually considered part of the capital outlay since these systems already exist! One should not overlook the fact that much of the existing mining and transportation industry is tied down in the operation of coal-fired stations. Unconventional items like heavy water plants draw raised eyebrows, while coal transportation

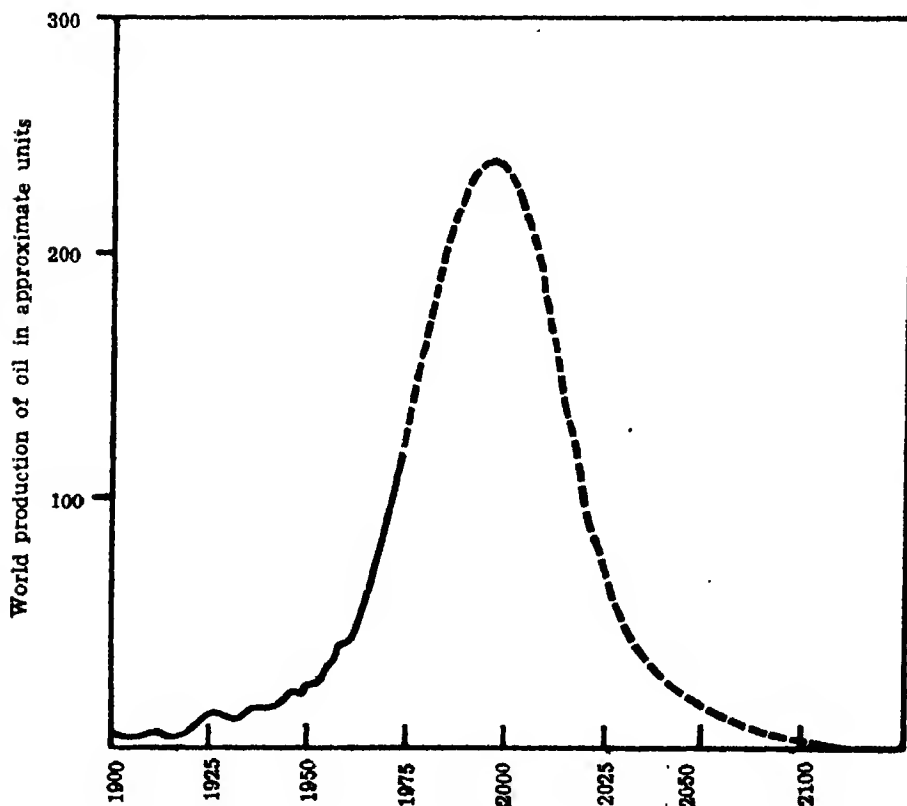
is just part of the Indian Railway long-cherished British heritage!

The most important point to drive home is that planning for the next two decades cannot be done by means of the raw economic considerations of today. When power generation becomes more scarce in the late Eighties, the coal supply situation will look even more grim than today, and suddenly the economic equation will have a different kind of solution. I am not suggesting that coal-fired thermal stations should be stopped. On the contrary, the programme should be geared up to meet the challenge of tomorrow. But the demands of the next decade are going to be considerably higher than what will be met by thermal stations and it is in this light that the economic considerations of investments in nuclear power have to be considered.

THERE is no precedent in human history of the anxiety, fear, even outrage, as well as interest and curiosity, in the ecological implications of nuclear power. The safety of nuclear power stations today is a much discussed subject. First, there lies the obvious exposure to radiation from the reactor itself. For the purpose of general comparison an average person in India receives about 90 units of radiation from natural sources such as elementary particles showering the earth along with radioactive substances in our body. A person living in an urban area would receive almost double the dosage from coal burning (a constant feature in most of urban India) and occasional X-ray exposures. On the other hand, if 1,000 reactors were installed in India, an average person would receive only one thousandth part of that unit.

A more obvious and widespread fear at present is that a reactor accident would release a catastrophic amount of radioactivity, tantamount to a mild atomic explosion. The only near-dangerous situation in the short history of the world's nuclear power programme is the "meltdown" in the plant at Three-Mile Island at Harrisburg in USA in 1979. (A meltdown is an unlikely event whereby the whole reactor attains a temperature so high as to melt its very core through the bottom of the reactor.) In spite of the worldwide panic about Three Mile Island, it turned out to be the most celebrated non-event of the year. No significant damage was done to any building or any animal or human being. Norman Rasmussen of MIT, in a study carried out recently in the United States concluded that in the highly unlikely event of a meltdown there could be a maximum of 5,000 cancer deaths, spread over at least one generation. That would be truly tragic but to put that figure in proper perspective Rasmussen, taking the US as a study case, found that there are 300,000 deaths every year from cancer due to other causes.

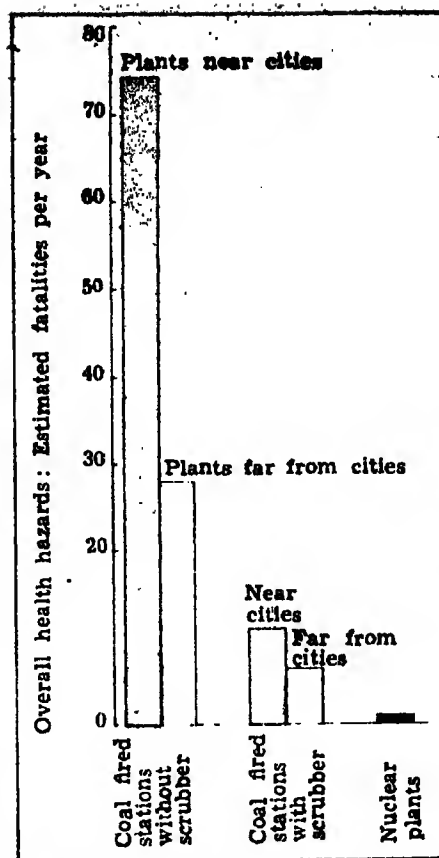
A reactor accident is not going to bring the world to the brink of a war, neither will it be the end of the



world. It is an eventuality much less serious than most minor wars. By way of comparison an explosion in a large petroleum storage centre could be much worse. The danger from a dam breach like the one that took place in Saurashtra recently, is far more serious as was abundantly clear.

One of the major problems related to nuclear energy is the question of waste disposal. After the fuel is burnt in the reactor, a portion of the waste fuel remains radioactive. Although the problem of waste disposal is a real one, the anti-nuclear lobby taking advantage of the ignorance of the general public has managed to create a mood of acute anxiety in many parts of the world. It is necessary therefore to understand thoroughly the various stages of waste disposal.

First of all, the spent fuel, after being unloaded from the reactor, still remains radioactive. The material is then dropped into a tank of water where it is left for a period ranging from a few months to more than a year. The water absorbs the heat and shields the surroundings from radiation. After the cooling period the fuel is either shipped or sent by railways to a chemical reprocessing plant. (India has one such plant at Tarapur, but the contract between the United States and India implies that as long as the US supplies enriched uranium for the running of Tarapur, the reprocessing plant cannot be operated. At the point the US stops supply of the enriched uranium no such obligation remains about the operation of India's reprocessing plant). The fuel rods in the chemical plant are cut open and the pellets dissolved. The uranium and the plutonium are separated and can be used again as reactor fuel. (Because plutonium is the potential ingredient of a bomb the United States is advocating strict safeguards. (At least, that is the theoretical idea!) The remaining fission products are the wastes — these are first dipped in a water solution in order that the radioactivity should decay further. Special tanks with double walls are used to ensure that no leakage takes place. After five years the wastes are converted into solids and after another five years they are shifted to a national repository. There have been many methods developed to ensure that the remaining radioactivity does not leak out from the underground repository or that the diffusion of radioactive elements within the earth's crust does not cause harm in future. The most beautiful "experiment" that can be cited here to convince general readers about the relative safety of the method is in fact carried out by earth. What is now the Gabon Republic in Africa was in fact some 1.8 billion years ago a natural nuclear reactor. A metal ore, in that area, is extremely rich in uranium, ranging from 10 to 60 per cent. The ore, also contained about 15 per cent water, a condition similar to a rather efficient light water reactor. Plutonium 239 was formed after the fission — and the curious thing is that this



highly toxic material, dubbed as the most dangerous element in the world did not move as much as a millimetre during the natural reactor's 25,000 year lifetime. Further, the fission products apart from the volatile gas have stayed close to the uranium even after a period of two billion years.

Another widespread view is that the terrorists or extremists on the international political scene might try to smuggle plutonium out and

Thermal power plant



make a bomb. This is highly unlikely. In the reactors, plutonium is in the fuel rod along with all the fission products. Even after the rods are reprocessed, plutonium is usually mixed with an appropriate quantity of uranium and is unsuitable for bombs. Plutonium can be used for explosive purposes only after it has been separated from uranium; the separation process requires a highly sophisticated and complex chemical technology. Such a possibility it appears, can be a potential problem only if the so-called terrorists have in their disposal the allied infrastructure for the chemical separation process. By definition, the terrorists could hardly be called terrorists then; since they would have to be supported by powerful nations! Smuggling of uranium-235 however is a different story and there is ample evidence that small quantities of uranium-235 show up in the most unexpected place in the world — rumours say even in Rawalpindi! Even so, the necessary infrastructure required to sustain a reasonable nuclear technology cannot be achieved by smuggling a few tonnes of uranium alone.

It is not widely known that the coal used in thermal power stations and the residual flyash are radioactive. For each unit of 500 mw, thermal plants produce 18,000 truckloads of ash whereas the total amount of fuel discharged from an equivalent nuclear power station would require hardly 25 truckloads. The psychological factor about the horror and possible genetic imbalances that accompany nuclear power stations seems to be unfounded — although of course, one must concede that coal is something all of us have been used to for hundreds of years whereas reactors are relatively new.

THE continuous hike in oil prices and the analysis of energy resources have brought into focus particularly in the developing countries that solar energy should be exploited to the hilt. The irony is, that even in solar technology the Western industrialised nations are already more advanced than the Third World countries including India. There is no doubt whatever that large scale applications of solar-powered miniplants and other auxiliary equipment should be developed rapidly in this country. There are really two broad methods of harnessing solar energy. The first is to manufacture the so-called "solar mirror", where a whole host of mirrors, whose movements can be controlled by a computer, can be so aligned that the solar rays can be focussed on to a boiler following which traditional methods can be applied to extract electricity from it. However the capital outlay for such a programme still remains prohibitive. The second is to develop photovoltaic cells or solar cells. In Stanford, USA, scientists feel that by 1985 the silicon cells they have developed will be a commercial proposition for generating electricity. In our country, although work is being



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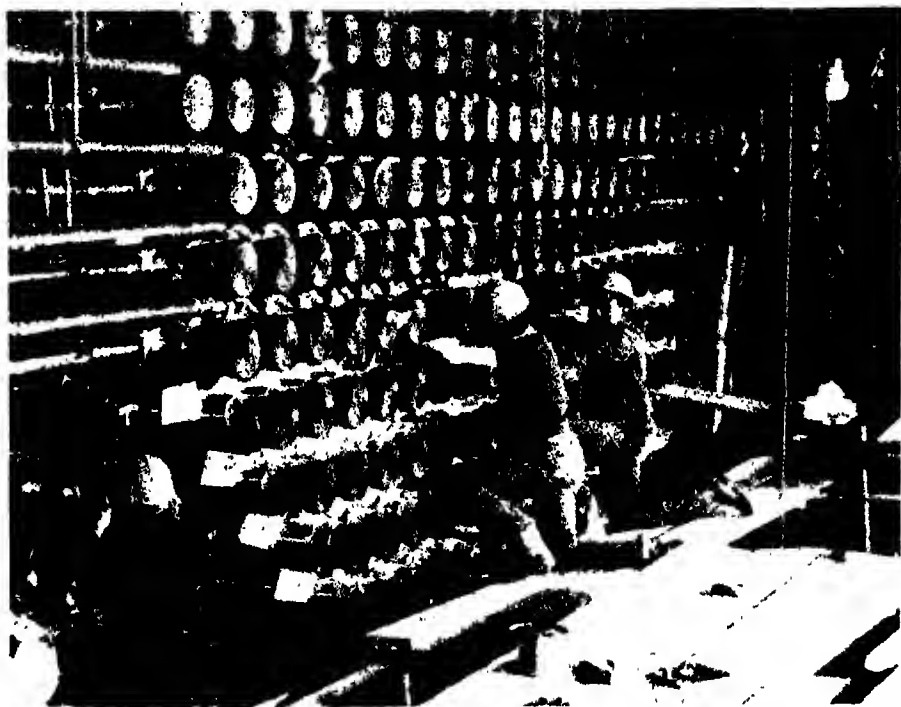
done to harness solar energy, the activities are yet to proceed beyond the laboratory level. Clearly, the Government should give the programme highest priority.

However, a simple analysis, conducted by the distinguished Soviet scientist, Peter Kaplaza shows that solar energy will be able to fill in only some of the small-scale power demands such as domestic consumption but will always fall short of the demand of large-scale industrial sectors. In case of solar energy one square kilometre is required to produce 100 Mw — the efficiency of a fission reactor is therefore at least one thousand times more than that of solar energy. Nuclear fusion energy is still in its infancy and other sources of energy like wind power can produce only limited electricity.

IN India, the basic philosophy from the days of Bhabha has been to use the existing uranium, which is limited, for thermal reactors of the heavy water type. The plutonium produced in these heavy water reactors will then be used to feed the Fast Breeder reactors. The Fast Breeder reactors will in turn convert the depleted uranium, recovered from the spent fuel, discharged from the heavy water reactors or the thorium from our vast reserves. The total installed capacity from thermal reactors could be 10,000 to 13,000 Mw and the total capacity from Breeder reactors can increase to many hundreds and thousands of Mw.

But this is only the theory. In practice, India has a 420 Mw nuclear plant in operation in Tarapur and a 220 Mw plant in Rajasthan. The total of 640 Mw represents less than 2.5 per cent of the country's total electricity generating capacity. The total power generated in the US is 53,000 Mw, over 11,000 Mw in Japan, more than 9000 Mw in West Germany and 10,000 Mw in the Soviet Union, Britain and France. Even Spain produces 2,000 Mw of electricity from nuclear plants. If the Rajasthan and Madras power plants had been commissioned in time India would have a nuclear capacity of more than 1200 Mw several years ago. Despite inordinate delays the late chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. Vikram Sarabhai planned for 2700 Mw of nuclear power by the end of this decade.

The decade is about to come to a close but the dream of Sarabhai remains a dream! What we have now is a department of raptured promises and rancorous recrimination. Between the target and the achievement there lies a vast, yawning gap. Not that there have been no genuine obstacles to the development programme. There are, for example, many deficiencies in the conventional engineering—primarily due to the lack of sophisticated Research and Development cells in the industrial infrastructure. The exacting specifications of nuclear technology are not easily met by existing manufacturing



Splitting atoms from a ton of uranium produces many times more power than burning a ton of coal or a similar amount of oil

industry. The procedural delays of a typical Government organisation haven't helped matters either. The carte blanche necessary to step up the implementation of large-scale sophisticated plants is just not feasible in the existing bureaucratic structure of New Delhi.

Over the years thus, in spite of revised deadlines, the immediate future is so uncertain that the estimated completion of the Rajasthan second unit in 1980 is still "subject to the availability of heavy water". The scene becomes even more depressing once one realises that the functioning power plant of Tarapur is dogged by the uncertain supply of enriched uranium from the US. Secondly, the Baroda "heavy water" project has run into heavy water incapable of producing adequate quantities of "heavy water". The plant, damaged by an accident is still being repaired. The Tuticorin plant has also been shut down; the heavy water projects at Kota and Talcher are way behind the schedule. The cost estimate, in the mean time, has gone up two to three times over.

The controversies rage through — the Governments come and go. The Americans and even the French go on employing various well-drilled tactics to put pressure on India's nuclear programme. It is abundantly clear that we have to be completely self-sufficient on our nuclear power programme, no word, no logic, no persuasion is going to impress any nation to be charitable to India on this sensitive issue. At all costs we simply have to speed up. There are surely genuine difficulties, but we have to pull ourselves together and attack the problem on a war footing — the motivation and the single-minded determination so necessary at this juncture are sadly missing.

It's time to forget the past and go ahead imaginatively letting loose the shackles of red tape.

It is also time to take stock. I have argued that in spite of all the best efforts in the thermal and hydel programmes, to guarantee a sustained growth of industry in the Eighties and the Nineties there appears to be no alternative but to step up our nuclear effort with ruthless determination. Governmental agencies should back the programme in every possible way. India, now, is poised, either for a breakthrough or a breakdown. Sweeping power failure has crippled vast sections of industry, and made daily life in cities like Calcutta miserable beyond belief. What we see now is only the beginning of doom, the magnitude of which is hard to comprehend. This is the time to initiate corrective measures and launch a power programme which could change the entire economic standard of this nation by ushering in a revolution in our industrial development.

The message is clear and simple. No argument can convince anyone that we can attain our industrial goal in the next decade or so without nuclear power playing a major role, along with thermal and the hydel power stations. Time is short and the odds are high. We must have a definitive long term leadership. If on the other hand we allow the momentum of our all-too familiar sloth to take over the already confused and corrupt political structure there will be one invincible inevitability — darkness and disaster, an irreversible descent to the decaying past!

*The views expressed in this article are entirely personal and not the official policy of any governmental agencies.





BETTER GET
OUT BEFORE
THE OTHER
ONE COMES
BACK!



YOOHOO!
ASTERIX! HERE
I AM!

!!!



LOOK WHAT I FOUND,
ASTERIX! I'LL LET YOU
HAVE A LITTLE
IF YOU LIKE.



HULLO,
WHERE'S
ASTERIX?

I... I DON'T KNOW...
BUT YOUR FRIEND
LEFT. I DIDN'T
HAVE ANY REASON
TO STOP HIM...



ASTERIX WOULD
NEVER HAVE LEFT
WITHOUT ME! WHERE
IS HE?

MERCY!
I'LL TALK!



I... I'M A MISFIT, YOU SEE, IT'S ALL
BECAUSE OF MY UNDERPRIVILEGED
ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION, AND
I BETRAYED ASTERIX TO THE
ROMANS WHO TOOK HIM TO
THE NEAREST GARRISON
TOWN...



WHAT'S
THIS TOWN
CALLED?

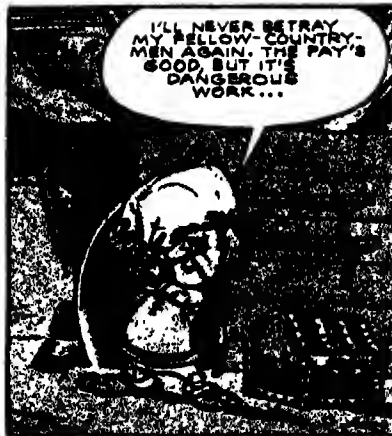
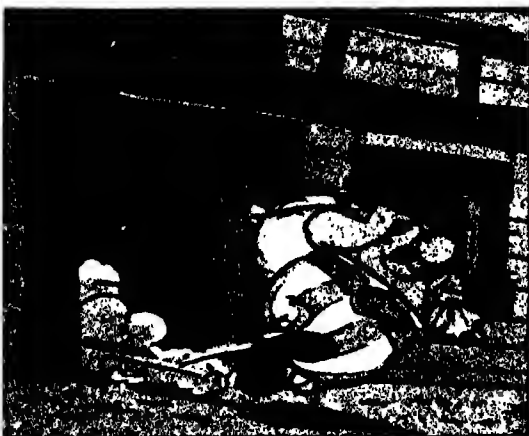
DIVODURUM.



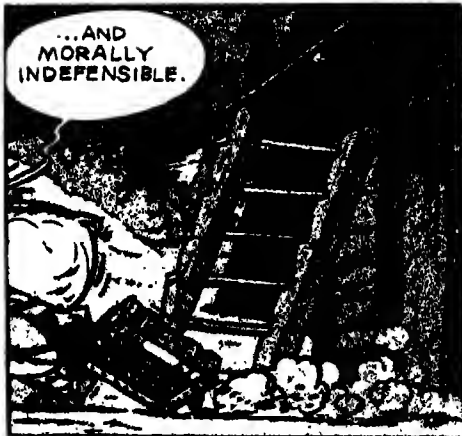
I DON'T CARE IF
YOU'VE ORDERED
RUM OR NOT. YOU
DON'T SOFTEN ME UP
LIKE THAT! WHERE'S
ASTERIX?

IN DIVODURUM. *
IT'S THE NAME OF
TOWN. IT'S EAST
OF HERE.

*METZ...



I'LL NEVER BETRAY
MY FELLOW-COUNTRY-
MEN AGAIN. THE PAY'S
GOOD, BUT IT'S
DANGEROUS
WORK...



...AND
MORALLY
INDEFENSIBLE.

'Iconoclast-preserver'

DECEMBER 30, 1979 marked the 92nd birth anniversary of Kula-pati K. M. Munshi — litterateur, journalist, educationist, lawyer, legislator, administrator, social reformer and political leader. Jayana Sheth's is an extensive study, the first in English, of Munshi's variegated life, work and art. If the study fails to comprehend the wide spectrum of Dr Munshi's personality, the compensation is a descriptive treatment of his literary works in Gujarati with a full translation and critical analysis of his historical play *Dhruvasvamadevi* to illustrate the kernel of his art.

By her critical evaluation of a once-glittering star of the Indian renaissance, often inadequately understood, the author helps a rational appreciation of the Brahmin from Broach who in sheer versatility outshone most of his contemporaries, if the range of his contribution is taken into account. Munshi spread himself in a dozen fields of public activity for over half a century. Though he made a mark wherever he entered by virtue of his brilliance, the totality of his eminence has come to be rated as hardly of the Everest level. His failure to strike it to the very top wherever he rose discounted him in the popular eye, particularly because he appeared to be lacking in consistency and steady loyalty to one ideology or activity like a Gandhi or Nehru or Jinnah or Ambedkar.

The ardent Congressman who later became, like Rajaji, a Swatantra fighter against the licence-permit raj, was too strong a man to be curbed by the non-violence discipline. Nor would he be a docile standard-bearer for the Congress culture dominated by Gandhi and Nehru whose opponents hardly ever survived in Congress politics. In political affiliation he was too close to Patel to be happy among Nehru's confidants. That is why after a short period in Nehru's Cabinet he was shunted out into the harmless precincts of UP's Raj Bhavan. Independent and courageous to the last, he was spiritually closer to Rajaji than to any other in the nationalist hierarchy. But even there, the Swatantra politics could not hold his active allegiance for long because his thrust on the socio-cultural front demanded all his energy and time in the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Jayana Sheth's research project, aided by an American university, is a welcome study though her attempt to sum up his art as the projection of his life and ideology sounds simplistic. Munshi was no doubt a "bundle of paradoxes" and even contradictions; and his life is justly describable as self-sculpture, its result a multi-faceted masterpiece. Pluralism in the functional sphere landed him in a cumulative mix of diverse trends struggling to make an

integrated soul. But his life and work covered a much wider canvas than his art could ever project or reflect. 'Know thyself', 'To thine own self be true', 'Surrender to God' were the injunctions which guided his life, despite set-backs.

The same was with his journalism. As editor of his English Weekly *Social Welfare*, intended as a forum for his Akhand Hindustan campaign in the forties after parting with Gandhi, he steered an independent course. The result was his alienation from the Congress and seeming identification with elements like the RSS for whom in actuality his cosmopolitan soul entertained little warmth beyond a back-patting affirmation of self-defence. So his detractors called his journal "Social Warfare". As Bombay's Home Minister, his firmness and impartiality in the communal riots benefited peace, but earned him epithets. His period as Union Food Minister is remembered only for his fathering the Vanamahotsava, and mothering, through Lilavati, the cheap food scheme of Annapurna.

Will Munshi be remembered by posterity as a star of the Indian Renaissance? Will he be honoured as an eminent writer who captured the moral issues of his time to reflect his subjective vision and also effect social regeneration? Or will he be a back-number in history as one who attempted too many things in life and merely succeeded in getting a mention in all of them? Will his very versatility, which detracted from his claim to a place in history, be ignored on a final assessment of the quality of his output?

Jayana Sheth focuses on Munshi's remarkable talent at dramatising India's past to project his own self, his vision and ideology, in a creative effort for social regeneration. She takes the play *Dhruvasvamadevi* to exemplify that talent and effort to use the episode from the Guptas to rationalise his own challenge to orthodoxy by his untraditional second marriage to a widow. Vikramaditya with his amorality and political shrewdness, providing the heroic national model and embodying the ideal of Aryan culture, is said to reflect Munshi; and Dhruvadevi, in the same play, his ideal of an independent female flouting social norms for self-fulfilment, resembles Lilavati his second wife. She is one of the three women who moulded his life: first wife Athilakshmi by her nobility, his mother by her loving tolerance, and Lilavati by providing his ideal life partner.

Munshi's literary works, like his personal life and career, have been such "mixtures of unpredictable elements" defying identification of any

clear pattern in the mingling of traits, in the projection of traditions, in love-hate for East and West alike. The one consistent element is self projection, in respect of ideology, activity and life, so characteristic of his age, his era.

Typical of the leaders of that era, his was a multi-dimensional life and career. To the author, he revealed himself best in his writings. They reflected his individualism, his urge for revitalising Indian culture by a synthesis of ancient values and modern achievements, which is what his major and most lasting contribution, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, stands for. As a revolutionary litterateur he contributed to the general heritage of India. In that, if he was an "iconoclast", he curiously left a number of icons undisturbed: e.g. caste.

The complex personality of Munshi, typical of the era struggling to synthesise with the ruins of the past the arrivals of the present, makes a search for similarities in what he saw as Indian culture amid many diversities. He sought to resolve in his own way the dichotomy between nationalism and regional loyalties, eastern and western education, ancient and modern traditions, all with the aid of his vigour, imagination and artistic talent. He denounced "westernism" but spoke up for English as the language of the elite whom he wanted to build up as the leaders of modern India. He verily hugged his "fetters", as he once described the English language; for he made the fullest use of the English language, literature and tradition for his writings, in his profession, in his contribution to constitution-making, in his search for and enjoyment of affluence, in seeking the "joys of life". The "iconoclast-preserver" in him is evident alike in personal and public life. His love-power complex remained the catalyst in his aggressive pursuit of money, power, fame, zealously exercising himself in many areas all at the same time.

Linguistic and religious minorities have special reason to be grateful for his contribution to the Indian Constitution among whose draftsmen he had a high position. He was among those who argued for English in the interest of the very integration that they saw in Hindi. He once wrote a condemnation of the British, *The Ruin that Britain Wrought*. If Munshi were alive today, having watched the decline of values and the ascendancy of the corruption-defection raj based in Delhi, he would have been busy scripting *The Ruin that Indians wrought*.

JOSEPH JOHN

Munshi self-sculptor, by Jayana Sheth, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Rs 65.

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THE MADRAS TEST

By DAVID McMAHON

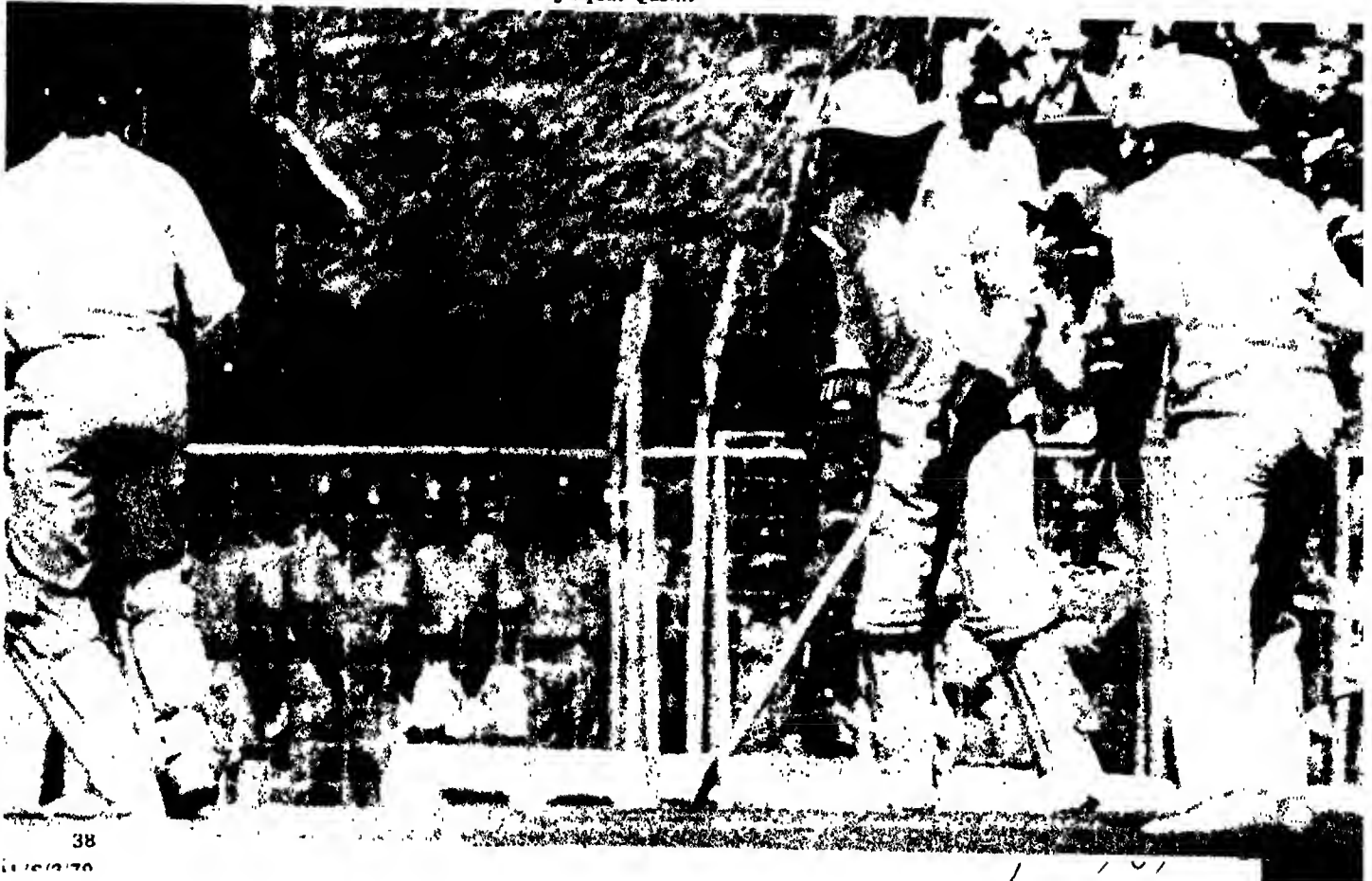


THE tail is dead, long live the tail. Gone are the days when the end of an Indian innings was a mere formality after the first six or seven wickets had fallen. Gone also are the days when the fortunes of the Indian team revolved around the success or failure of Sunil Gavaskar and Gundappa Vishwanath. And just as well too. Gavaskar must have been a happy man when the last four in the Indian batting lineup accounted for 136 runs. Consider the fact that India gained a first innings lead of 158

runs and it becomes clear just how valuable were the runs added by the last four batsmen. Even Dilip Doshi square cut Imran Khan with impunity much to the delight of the capacity crowd at Chepauk, and while they applauded hysterically, a nonchalant Doshi leaned casually on his bat as if there was nothing to it.

The best performance of the match was clearly that of Kapil Dev, who came in to join his captain with the score at 279 for 6 in the first innings and who saw the score to 412 before he was finally lbw to Imran. Kapil seems to have a remarkable ability to settle down first and on the easy paced Madras wicket he made this abundantly clear, to the frustration of the Pakistanis. He blazed away at the beginning at the bowling to score an amazing 49 runs out of the 60 that he and his captain added. Perhaps the best shot of Kapil's innings was a glorious hook for a six into the stands off the bowling of Imran Khan. It was a fitting revenge for what had taken place on the first day, when Imran cracked three successive fours in a single over off Kapil. It was a glorious innings. But Kapil had his share of luck as well when shortly before he got his 50 he tried to hit straight over the bowler, Sikander Bakht's head, Moshin Khan from mid on and

Ghavri steps out to drive, but is clean bowled by Iqbal Qasim





Yashpal sweeps Majid

Asif Iqbal from mid-off made an effort to take the catch. But each thought that the other would take it and the ball dropped in between them. Then, with his score at 80 he was dropped by Iqbal Qasim at second slip off Imran. But just four runs later he was out just short of a richly deserved century and 23 short of the thousand run mark in Test cricket. Add to his batting the fact that he took four wickets in Pakistan's first innings and removed Sadiq, Majid, Zaheer and Asif in 8 overs and you have the reason behind India's success.

Sandeep Patil who had good scores against the Pakistanis at Pune, was given the coveted Indian cap on January 15, the morning the match began. There was a great roar to greet the broad-shouldered all-rounder as he strode out to the wicket after the exit of Vishwanath. With no visible signs of nervousness, he got off the mark with a three off Imran and set about tackling the bowling in competent fashion. Just as he was stroking aggressively he was wonderfully caught by Javed Miandad off Bakht for only 15. But during his stay at the wicket he was completely in control, treating the bowling with the blade of his bat. We shall be seeing a lot more of this hard-hitting all-rounder in the future.

No report on the Madras Test would be complete without mention of wicket keeper Kirmani's accomplishments. His five victims in the first innings and two in the second drove vital nails into the coffin of the Pakistani batting. His dismissal of Mudassar in the first innings was an astounding legside collection as he launched himself into the air in anticipation of the leg glance. Zaheer



Abbas was also sent back in similar fashion when he tried a legside deflection. Those who said Kirmani would have a difficult job trying to fill the void left by Farokh Engineer must be singing a different tune now.

Apart from the good work of Kirmani, Kapil and the other bowlers, Pakistan's downfall was brought about by their own bad batting on the fourth day. Too many of them went for their runs as if there was no cause for worry. From the time they commenced their second innings shortly before lunch till close of play they lost seven all-important wickets. It was a repeat performance of Bombay except that there was no wicket to blame this time.

With such a massive deficit, the burden was on the shoulders of the openers and the other frontline batsmen but they lost six wickets before they made up the backlog. Sadiq went, caught by Binny at gully with only one run on the board and Mudassar went later with the total at 17. Zaheer Abbas once again failed to come upto expectations and fell to a wonderful catch by Dilip Vengsarkar. The one batsman on the visiting side who played according to the needs of the team was Javed Miandad, the self appointed clown who obligingly walks a few steps towards the pavilion whenever the crowd appeals for an lbw or caught behind. But he was in deadly earnest that afternoon, curbing his natural strokeplay and keeping his head down. In the words of his captain he is a born fighter and one could not help but admire the way he conducted his innings. Most important, he played out time at the

‘V.I.P.’ gets de compliment from a Dutch master of de art!



Coming from the land of Rembrandt, was Mieke Van Dyke*. "Goede morgen" he said cheerily, "Spreek U English?" And then did a fluent switch in language.

"I live," he said, "with the tulips of Amsterdam. But I travel everywhere. I fly maybe 100,000 kilometres a year. And I fly only with the beautiful 'V.I.P.'s."

At last, we had met him. The real flying Dutchman. But, what did he do?

"You could say I pack Dutch Courage—hazels of the stuff," he replied, referring to his vast brewery interests. (But, don't be misled, this was a man with several irons in the fire!)

"Your 'V.I.P.'," he said, "appeals to me."

"Yes," we replied, in the same tone, "'V.I.P.' always goes Dutch—it pays for itself!"

"Your 'V.I.P.'s can stand anything," he exclaimed, "From a flight off a car at 120 kms per hour... to the great Indian Drop Test!"

"The great Indian Drop Test?" we asked. We had heard him speak Dutch. But this, was Double Dutch!

"Ja! Ja!" he replied, "I come here and the porter drops the 'V.I.P.'. The doorman drops the 'V.I.P.'. The chauffeur drops the 'V.I.P.'. The hotel bell boy..."

We dropped the subject. "This time," he said, "I buy your new range, 'V.I.P.' Travelite. Right? You've roped together lightness and economy. It's the new Indian rope trick!"

"But I also like the first range

with the beautiful classic style. What do you call it?"

"Classic," we answered, simply.

"You have thought of everything" he carried on, "You have briefcases, carry-ons, suitcases, vandy cases... regular locks, combination locks... the works. And the colours! Now, when I go from here to America..."

"That's where you club your golf and business interests!" we quipped.

"America!" he exclaimed, "I learnt golf yesterday. It's the Scots and the Dutch who fight over the origin of the game. Now, I let a Scotsman win the argument. I'd much rather win the game!"

"But it must be a business interest that brings you so often to India..."

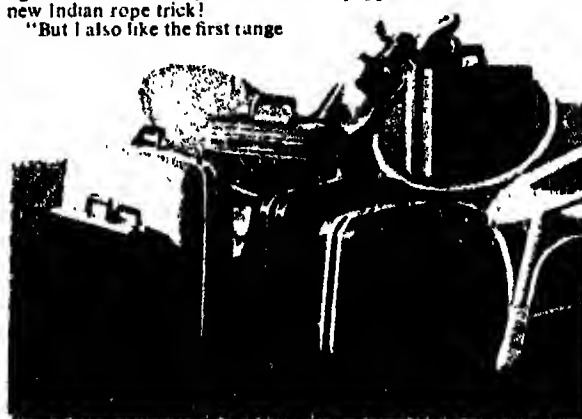
"Well, I have bags and bags of interests," he said with a roguish twinkle, "With a man like me, there's always something brewing!"

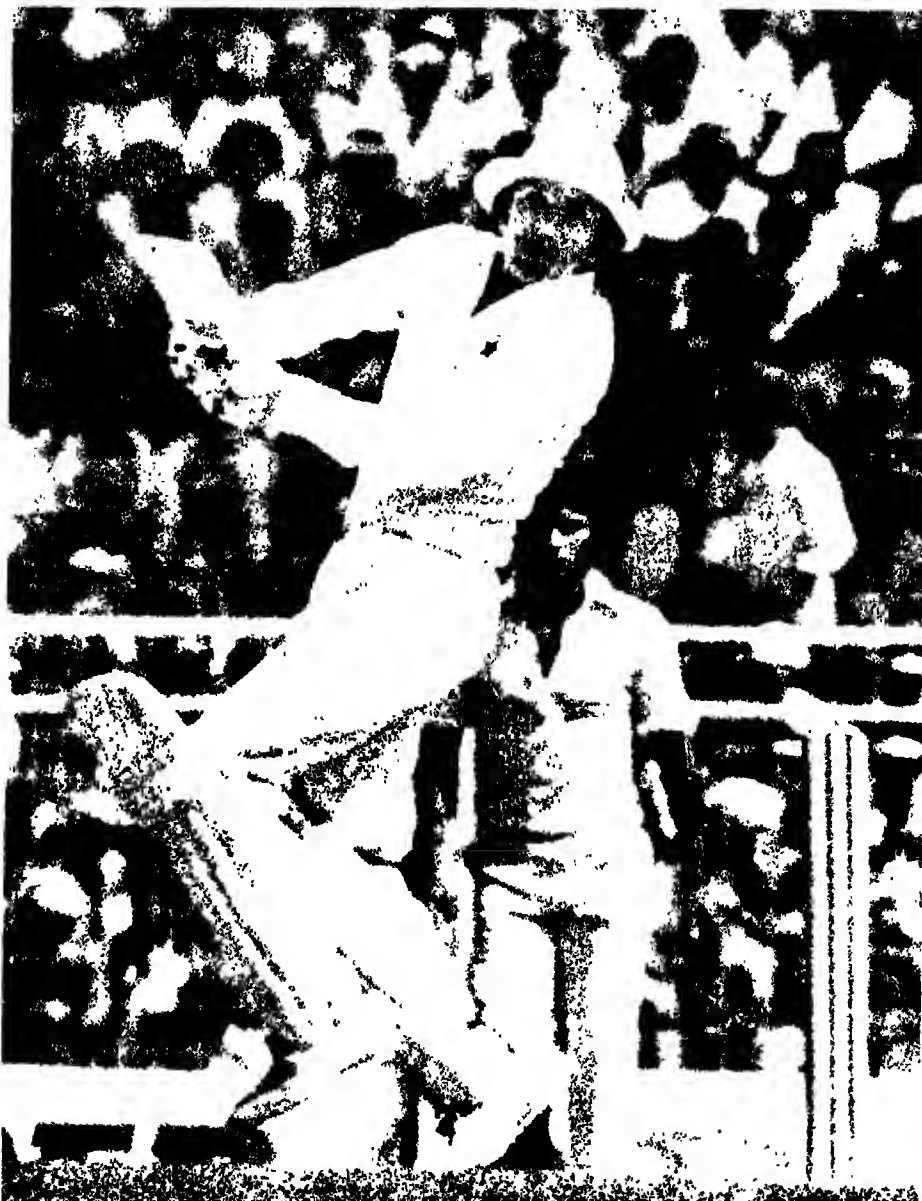
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Majid hooks Kapil for four runs

crease after his side had lost wickets they couldn't really afford.

Wasim Raja, against whose temperament there has always been a large question mark, turned up trumps yet again with a fighting innings. His team was tottering at 58 for 5 when he sauntered into the sunlight at Chepauk, chewing gum as if there was nothing at all to worry about. He drove through the covers, he hooked and he square cut in apparent disdain for our bowling. With him and Miandad at the wicket it began to look as if Pakistan might force a draw. And while Miandad played his restrained yet valuable innings, Raja kept hitting fours. In typical fashion he opened his account with a boundary and continued to drive fluently off the back foot. On two separate occasions he hit Karsan Ghavri for three successive fours and while the crowd shouted for more he continued chewing his gum as if plastering the bowling in a crisis was what he had been born to do.

THE blangras and the chanting and the fire-crackers started long before Sunil Gavaskar scored the runs to win the match and the series. They cheered. Everytime our openers hit a scoring stroke they cheered. And in between the cheers they celebrated with heavy calibre bombs in the stands. Once, when one loud explosion shook the stadium, Sadiq Mohammad dropped flat on his back on the Chepauk turf and pretended he was dead. Javed Miandad scampered up, inspected his prone form and signalled to the crowd that he was dead. Then the normally impassive Majid Khan ran in from first slip and together they lugged the "corpse" towards the pavilion before all three returned to their positions grinning widely. After it was all over, the crowds chaired Kapil and Gavaskar, chanting with joy. The ill-fated tour of Pakistan in 1978 suddenly seemed very very far away.

Imran's 'century'

WHEN Imran Khan spreadeagled Syed Kirmani's stumps in India's first innings, his team mates clustered around him, thumping him on his back, ruffling his hair and hugging him. January 17 was a very special day for the Pakistan opening bowler, for the dismissal of the Indian wicket-keeper represented his hundredth Test wicket. Imran landed in India with 22 Test appearances behind him and 94 wickets to his name, all set to take the fastest hundred wickets for his country.



In the first innings at Bangalore he was in devastating form and removed Chetan Chauhan, Dilip Vengsarkar and Roger Binny to take his tally to 97. Dilip Doshi, the last man, had to contend with a fiery spell from him before being clean-bowled and then Imran needed just two more wickets to get his hundred. But Imran's luck ran out at Delhi where after bowling seven overs in India's first innings, his back gave out and as he was still in pain he managed only one more over in the second innings. He agreed to play at Bombay but there too it was clear that he was not fully cured and he did very little bowling on the Wankhede wicket.

It was only logical that he should be rested for the Kanpur test, so that he was 100 per cent fit for the Fifth Test at Madras. Chepauk proved that there was no trace of the injury and Dilip Vengsarkar and Syed Kirmani were Imran's 99th and 100th victims respectively. But there was one more personal triumph for Imran. His 101st victim was Sunil Gavaskar, who was caught by Sadiq Mohammed at gully when he tried to cut a ball outside the off stump. It was a vital wicket for the tourists, for Sunil looked set for yet another double century. It was also the first time on this tour that Imran has managed to dismiss the Indian captain. ■

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THERE were three slips, a gully, a backward point, an extra cover, mid-on, mid-off and mid-wicket. But they were all stationary and none of them wore flannels and cricket boots. They wore helmets and sandals and were clad in the atrociously flared shorts that are synonymous with every police force in the country. At every interval in play they took up their positions around the pitch with their lathis and stood there self-consciously in front of the capacity crowd at Chepauk.

Invasions of the field were also noticeably fewer and further bet-



ween, thanks to excellent police and ground arrangements. The first foray onto the turf was made by one brave soul who evaded the policemen when Sunil Gavaskar got his century on the morning of the third day. His invasion of the field certainly took some doing. And this alone bears explanation. At Chepauk there are two barbed wire fences as an extra precaution while at other Indian Test centres there is just one fence. This enterprising soul scaled the first fence, braced himself and launched himself into the air to clear the second fence. His difficult feat accomplished, he ran on and handed the Indian skipper, a sweet in recognition of his efforts.

That was not all. With Yashpal in fine form and fast approaching his fifty, another exuberant spectator left his seat and waited, perched halfway up the inner fence, for his chance to run on and congratulate the Haryana batsman. He was noticed by a volunteer inside the ground and the latter walked over to him and signalled that he should get down. But the spectator would not be deterred and tried passing the volunteer a flatful of sweets through the barbed wire. When that did not work he offered the volunteer a hand-shake as a gesture of friendship but got a clenched fist by way of reply. What really broke his spirit, though, was the fact that Yashpal was bowled by Iqbal Qasim four short of a well deserved 50 and he did not get the chance to run onto the field and embrace his hero.

A new look team

IT must be several years since an Indian Test team had only one spinner in the eleven. There were a number of furrowed brows when the Indian team for the Madras Test was announced and Shival Yadav was named twelfth man. For thousands of cricket fans in this country the young Hyderabad off-spinner was the logical successor to ex-skipper Venkataraghavan and though there had been speculation in some circles that Yadav would be dropped for this Test in favour of Bombay all-rounder Sandeep Patil, no one really took the theory seriously.

Chepauk is the one Test centre where Shival has not played for

fifth Test against Pakistan, with four all-rounders in the side. The national hunt for a genuine all-rounder shows no signs of abating. The senior-most of the four all-rounders in the team is Kar-san Ghavri who made his debut in 1974-75, the sort of person who is always doing something on the field, be it bowling, batting or fielding. In the words of Kim Hughes, he is one person who is grossly underestimated by his countrymen. Kapil is next on the seniority rung, having made his debut in Pakistan. Roger Binny has already proved his worth in the current series and has cornered a great deal of praise for him-



Sandeep Patil in action

his country. In September last year he was in the reserves for the first Test against Kim Hughes's Australians here at Madras. It was only in the second Test of that series that he made his Test debut, taking an admirable haul of seven wickets. Yadav displayed that he was a fast learner in the nine Test matches he played and seemed to be shaping well although he did need to develop the art of bowling round the wicket. According to Sunil Gavaskar, the logic behind the dropping of the young spinner is straightforward: "It's very simple", he said. "We felt that it would be better to play Sandeep because he would be able to contribute both as a batsman and a bowler, while Shival's contribution would just have been to the bowling department."

As a result it was a new look Indian team that went into the

self from both Sunil Gavaskar and Asif Iqbal, while Sandeep Patil, judging by his recent feats, has quite a bit of Test cricket in front of him. It has been a long time since there has been such a well-balanced Indian side which will doubtless, like wine, get better with age.

There is greater depth in our batting, for a start, and while the artistry of the spin quartet is going to be missed, there can be no conceivable harm in nurturing medium pacers alongside spinners. It must also be an excellent sign for Indian cricket that four players earned their Test caps in the 1978-79 season against Australia and Pakistan. Judging by appearances, all those who raised laughs with jokes about the death of Indian cricket will now have to start thinking of a different line.

ONCE again the good Samaritans, *Sunil Dutt* and *Nargis* were called upon by an about-to-be wed couple, to do the *kanyadaam*. This time it was the surprise wedding of villain *Ranjeet* with his ten-year long friend *Pushpa*: earlier it had been *Rakhee's* wedding. *Pushpa* admitted to feeling nothing new, considering that they had been living together for the past ten years and she was almost a wife to him. All that bullaballoo which *Ranjeet's* erstwhile sex-kitten *Jamie* from England had created while she was living with him came to nought, because apparently *Ranjeet* had the good sense or faith to marry the woman who gave him ten years of her life and put up with him. *Jamie* meanwhile, has moved away, not only from his house but the country too and is back in London, or wherever it was she came from.

WHAT's this we hear about *Zeenat Aman's* latest escort being *Feroze Khan*, brother of *Sanjay*? Now that she has been shooting for his film with him, is she going to fall in love all over again? If she is, she is heading for a heartbreak again, for *Feroze* is a married man. Once again she will be landed with a family man. Best of luck to her.

SANJAY, it seems is least affected by his recent split with *Zeenat*. It is apparent in his behaviour: he is still party-going and has a good time with girls who care to fall for him. All this shows that his affair with *Zeenat* meant nothing to him. He continues to turn up for parties with wife *Zarine*, in spite of *Zeenat's* presence there. This again proves that they both want to show that they don't care though I didn't think, in this case, showing is believing.

NO, *Vinod Khanna* and *Smita Patil* are not getting married. Not yet, anyway. They are still at the "we're good friends" stage, which means things are moving pretty fast towards a more definite stand as far as they are

concerned. As for *Smita*, she refuses to comment on her relationship and *Vinod* likewise makes no comment.

GUESS what happened at the close of the last year and on the heels of the new year? *Garam Dharam* finally shed all his fascination for *Hema Malini* and sighed to a friend in confidence that they had parted company. Or at least it is not as intimate as it had been all these years. Poor *Hema*, after losing her father, she had been very close to *Dharam* and there were rumours that she even planned to



Bindu

move away from the house in which she has been living with her mother and family. Now it seems it has all gone kaput. Somebody tells me she is, in all probability, going to be involved with a man you all know very well. I wouldn't tell you his name right now—but wait till I get the signal from him to say so.

SUNIL GAVASKAR seems to have cornered quite a bit of glamour from the filmworld. In the spate of parties by various people like *Sujit Kumar*, *Manoj* and others, more than the Pakistani players, our man *Gavaskar* seemed to steal the limelight from



everyone else. Now that he has featured on the cover of a film-magazine—and that, incidentally, proved quite a money spinner since most sports-fans bought the magazine mistaking it for a sports magazine—will it be long before *Gavaskar* makes it as an actor? Actually, two of his Marathi films are in the can—with trouble besetting their shooting. So maybe if the right Hindi filmmaker takes him, *Sunil* might start a fresh innings. What's more, he has a nice ready-built clean-home image, with a good-looking wife and a nice little son.

RATANADEEP has flopped. A sorry state for *Hema* and also for *Basu Chatterji*. The producer, *Hema's* mother, is also involved. The *Dharam-Hema* undivide team could not get a single film going successfully, for the past year, and now looks like they cannot do it divided, too. A lot of hopes are pinned on *Burning Train*, which is awaiting release.



Neetu Singh

KAMLAHASAN's dislike for mythologicals and devotionals continues. Since he isn't much of a "believer" at all, he feels quite uncomfortable in such films, he says. Some producers did try to tell him that if he can play a shady character in a film, why can't he do a devotional? But Kamalahasan wouldn't buy that. Last year producer Villampuri Somanathan somehow coaxed Kamalahasan to act in a semi-religious film *Sivappukall Mookuthi* but that turned out to be one hell of a flop.

WHEN Jeetendra saw the Telugu superhit *Yamagola*, he was so charmed by it that he persuaded its producer to make a Hindi version. Of course Jeetendra played the male lead and for the decorative heroine's role Jayaprada was retained. Good for her that *Lok Parlok* was released along with *Surgam*. Since the latter is a solid hit Jayaprada isn't disappointed with the negligible box-office success of *Lok Parlok*. But is Jeetendra having second thoughts on remaking more Telugu hits? His own film *Jyothi Hane Juale*, being directed by Dasari Narayana Rao, is also inspired by a Telugu hit.

PPRATAP POTIEN must have welcomed his role as Shob's boy-friend in *Azhiatha Kolangal* because he got an opportunity to flirt around in mod clothes. In his previous films, he was cast in rustic roles. But in *Azhiatha* his role is so small that hardly anyone noticed him and one got the feeling that he was rather uncomfortable too.

GIRISH KARNAD's Kannada fans felt great when he was cast opposite Hema Malini in *Ratnadeep* but the film turned out to be a tame affair. And though Girish has done a slightly better job than in *Nishant* and *Manthan*, he's hardly impressive.

Anveshane, a Kannada film he is promoting (he's acting in it too) has run into some financial trouble and Girish believes that by making pots of money in Hindi films, he can go around making the kind of Kannada films he believes in. And those who accuse him of being



Jaya Sudha



Sarita

hundred per cent mercenary would be surprised to note that he has accepted a "guest role" in an Assamese film *Aparupa*; he plays a tea plantation owner who takes to drinking soon after his wife's death.

IN many of his films, Thengai Srinivasan's buffoonery gets him more applause than the hero but he can't really be expected to play a comedian in real life too. Few days ago, he was spotted in the waiting room of Coimbatore railway station. In a few seconds, the hall was packed by curious fans. A young boy wanted him to dance. Thengai looked very tired and lost. His eyes were bright red. "He has been drinking", said one of the onlookers. "Don't be mad," his friend snapped back. "Thengai claims to be MGR's disciple. How can he drink?" Thengai kept on asking the crowd to go away; he even got up couple of times, folded his hands and asked to be left in peace. The crowd dispersed only when some other occupants of the waiting room called in the police.

WHY did *Azhiatha Kolangal* get rather poor receptions in smaller towns? Some believe that the audiences got worked up seeing a young schoolboy having a crush on his teacher. But is it possible that the males were a bit disappointed with the smooching scenes between the teacher and the student? After the success of Malayalam films like *Rathi Nivedham* and *Thakara* which showed teenagers sleeping with elderly women, Tamil Nadu audiences craved for the same.

HEARD this one? *Rathi Agnihotri*, the 'mod, mod' star, was once asked whether she played any musical instrument. Pat came the reply: "Yes, the gramophone." Didn't know she had that deadly a sense of humour.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Your solar sign is Arles, your ruling planet is Mars, your lucky day is Tuesday, your lucky colour is crimson and your lucky gems are coral and diamond.

For most people born under this planet, 1980 should prove to be a happy and fortunate year. The last few months of 1980 are expected to be particularly lucky.

People born at noon will enjoy good health and 1980, on the whole, will prove exceptionally lucky for them. In the latter part of the year they will have a string of achievements. Those born at about sunset will experience depression and low spirits. However, on the business front, they will make huge profits and also consolidate earlier gains. The last three months of the year will prove lucky for those engaged in professional careers. Those born around midnight may experience some problems on the financial front. Disagreements on the domestic front are also likely to worry them incessantly. Those born on March 21, March 22 or March 23 are likely to enjoy a lot of good fortune this year. Valuable advice from relatives, elders and friends will contribute to their success. Those born between March 24 and 28 will have a good start at the beginning of the year but they will reach their climax only in May. Those celebrating their birthday on March 29 are not unlikely to meet a lot of opposition from either relatives or business associates.

Those born on March 30, March 31 or April 1, may be compelled to enter into an agreement with an elderly associate. The negotiations will prove advantageous. New business deals will bring in a lot of profits in September and early October. Those born on April 5 are advised to look after their health, both mental and physical. In March, they may celebrate a happy romance. November promises further progress on all fronts.

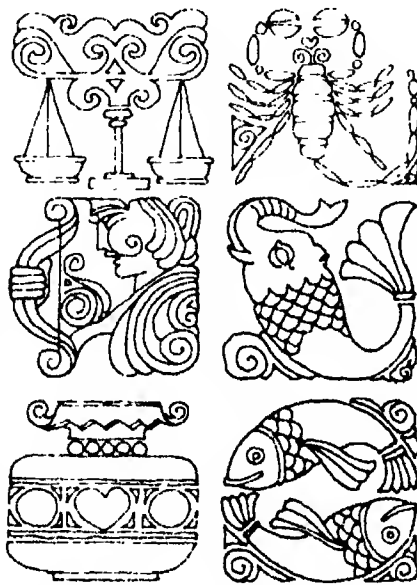
Everyone born under this planet should guard against over optimism and extravagance. Those born around April 20 may do a fair bit of travelling.



TAURUS (April 21— May 22) Your solar sign is Taurus, your ruling planet is Venus, your lucky day is Friday, your lucky colour is dark blue and your fortunate gem is the sapphire.



1980 for you



Those born on or around April 21 will make immense gains if they follow the timely advice of elders and family friends. They will gain through elders.

For those born between April 26 and 27, promising opportunities are in the offing in the months of July and August. September will be a trying month for those born between April 28 and 29. But those who celebrate their birth-

days on April 30 will prosper in January with the help of friends. Those born between May 1 and 4 are recommended to check strong tendencies to extravagance particularly in May and December. They are also advised to pay a little extra attention to health at the beginning of March. Those who celebrate their birthdays between May 5 and 8 experience improved health and better fortunes. May 8 is a particularly lucky birthday. February will prove to be the best month for those whose birthdays are on May 9. They may gain through speculation while those celebrating their birthdays between May 13 and 16 will prosper and enjoy good fortunes in love and romance.



GEMINI (May 23 — June 21)—Your solar sign is Gemini, your ruling planet is Mercury, your fortunate day is Wednesday and your lucky colour is yellow. Your fortunate gem is the emerald. Except for some of those born under this sign there will no hardship for the others though they might suffer more due to the general conditions prevailing. They will have a sense of stability as regards personal affairs. They might suffer financially. Therefore, they should take careful stock of their investments.

There will be success and good fortune in the second part of the year for those who celebrate their birthdays on or near May 22, May 24 and May 25. They will prosper in business in January and December. All the remaining birthdays of May indicate romance in March and April, exceptionally great business activity in June followed by happiness at the end of the year. The first five birthdays in June indicate romance and are in some way linked with the occult sciences.

Those celebrating their birthdays on or near June 7 will have a lot of business and intellectual activity in May although whatever they may do might lead to some criticism at the end of June. Those who celebrate their birthdays between June 9 and 11 will also excel in business and speculation in January and September. At the same time their children will make rapid progress in their vocation and will succeed in their studies. However, they should not take risks in the two months. Care should be taken of the health of self and children.

Those who celebrate their birthdays on June 14 and 15, are recommended to be careful at the end of November. Those whose birthdays fall on the remaining days will be upset in spring. A big change is in the offing for those whose birthdays are on June 18. This will be linked with a happy romance in March.



CANCER (June 22—July 22)—Your solar sign is Cancer, your ruling planet is the Moon, your fortunate day is Monday, your lucky colour is violet and your fortunate gems are the pearl and agate.

Those born around noon will make new and important friends and will be very happy towards the end of the year. Those born around sunset will benefit from deaths of relations and may also receive fortune through their spouses or partners. Those celebrating their birthdays on June 22, 23 and 24 will benefit from the occult sciences and will be very happy due to a romance. Those celebrating their birthday on June 27 will travel extensively. Those celebrating their birthdays on July 2 and 3 will experience an eventful and happy year. January will be a time for intense business activity. May will see intense social activity.

Those whose birthdays are on or around July 11 will receive an excellent business opportunity and will exploit it at the end of May or the beginning of June. July will be a time for a well-deserved rest for them. Those celebrating their birthdays on or around July 16 will have good fortune in spring when they might win a lottery. Those whose birthdays fall on July 17 and 18 will gain an excellent business opportunity in the beginning of August or September. Those whose birthdays are on July 22 are advised to stay away from deceptive friends in July and November.

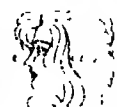


LEO (July 23—August 23)—Your solar sign is Leo, your ruling planet is the Sun, your most fortunate day is Sunday, your lucky colour is orange, your fortunate gem is the ruby.

This year will be one of sudden changes and remarkable events, and this will apply especially to those born in July and the first two days of August. Those born at noon will experience great changes in business and acquire new friends. Those born at sunset will experience great matrimonial difficulties. These may ultimately culminate in divorce and separation. Those born at midnight are advised to take care of their

health. Those born between July 23 and 25 will have some baffling problems facing them at the beginning of the year. They are advised to take the advice of their relatives. Those born on or around July 28 are advised not to speculate and to avoid getting into quarrels around the end of June and beginning of July. August and September should prove to be very favourable months for those celebrating their birthday on July 31 and August 1. They will benefit through their elders, property deals and service contracts. Those born between August 2 and 5—especially August 2—should be careful while conducting business deals.

Those celebrating their birthdays on August 5 and 7 are possibly going to gain through calculated business risks and through elders around March and April. A happy romance is forecast in July. Those born on or around August 9 will be happy in the second half of October. There will be social events. Children will also be the cause of happiness. They will also gain from speculation. For those celebrating their birthdays on August 10 may witness a renewal of friendship (probably formed during a journey) and subsequent marriage before the end of the year. Those with birthdays on August 12 and 13 are advised to be careful in minor business and vocational matters in April and May. Those whose birthdays fall on August 18, 21 and 22 can expect a fair share of gain.



VIRGO (August 23—September 22)—Your solar sign is Virgo, your ruling planet is Mercury, your most fortunate day is Wednesday, your lucky colour is dark yellow and your lucky gem is the sardonyx.

Apart from a few exceptions the outlook for those born under Virgo in 1980 is exceptionally good. Those born around sunrise will have the very best of health and good fortune. Those born later prosper in business and win distinction in vocation. Those born around sunset will benefit through their spouses and partners and some will benefit from legacies. Those who were born around midnight will find happiness in their domestic and personal lives. Those born between August 23 to 26 will gain through the occult and from occult practitioners. They might also gain through a journey in January or February. Those celebrating their birthdays from August 31 to September 1 are advised to take care of their health around their birthdays. Those

born on or near September 4 will experience an eventful year. They will gain through speculation and through children in January and through distant relatives in May. But their most successful months are likely to be September and December. In September they will be extremely busy while in December they will reap the benefits of their hard work. Those born on September 7 are advised to exercise extreme caution in their relations with their elders and in matters dealing with property. They should avoid quarrels and needless risks in April and guard against financial deceptions in July. Those born on September 11 and 12 may suffer a minor setback in April and May.



LIBRA (September 23—October 22)—Your solar sign is Libra, your ruling planet is Venus, your most fortunate day is Thursday, your lucky colour is pale blue, your fortunate gem is chrysolite.

Librans can look forward to 1980 with the utmost confidence, especially in the last few months of the year. This is especially applicable to people born around sunrise.

Those born between September 23 and 25 will experience much happiness and good fortune in January and February. The second half of August will also prove to be an enjoyable time. Librans born on September 26 and 27 will form new friends and be married by the end of summer. Romance is also forecast. Those born on September 29 are likely to be in love by the end of summer. Those born on September 30 will benefit from elders and property matters by August. Those born between October 1 and 3 are, however, advised to exercise caution in matters relating to business in January. Those born on October 5 will form important friendships and as a result of such friendships will suddenly discover a splendid business or financial opportunity and exploit the same to great advantage by the end of 1980. For those born between October 6 and 7 a speculative venture may turn out well. A lot of money will also be made. Those born between October 17 and 18 will travel a lot. For those born on October 21 a romantic involvement is forecast.



SCORPIO (October 23—November 21)—Your solar sign is Scorpio, your ruling planet is Mars, your most fortunate day is Tuesday, your lucky colour is dark red and your fortunate gem is the opal.

Scorpions are likely to find 1980 exceedingly eventful and fairly

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successful, especially if they can succeed in curbing their inclination to indulge in extravagance which will be particularly manifest in August and September. In many cases they will be very busy settling or moving into new homes at the beginning of the year. For those born between October 30 and November 4, January and November should prove to be their best months. They will also travel a great deal. Those born between November 2 and 3 are advised to take care of their health in spring and those born between November 4 and 5 should take care of their health in January and May. But it is definite that they will travel a lot. Travelling will also mean that a lot of new friends will be acquired in the process. For those born between October 30 and November 4, January and November should prove to be the best months. Those celebrating their birthdays on November 2 and 3, however, are advised to take extra care of their health. A romantic involvement is forecast in early spring for those born between November 6 and 9. Those born between November 9 and 13 prosper in January and February, but perhaps the most fortunate birthdays are November 14, 15 and 16. Those born on these days will prosper exceedingly in August, September and October. An excellent period for travelling as well as launching on speculative enterprises. Those born on November 17 are advised not to avoid exert themselves too much.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22—December 22) Your solar sign is Sagittarius, your ruling planet is Jupiter, your

most fortunate day is Thursday, your lucky colour is purple and your lucky gem the topaz.

This should prove to be a good year for most Sagittarians. Health will take a turn for the better and financial problems will not assume terrifying proportions.

Among the more auspicious birthdays will be November 22-25 of which the 22nd and 23rd will perhaps be the best. Success in the field of business in January will be followed by equally good fortune and social prominence in March and April and a spectacular

will come at the end of the year. Those celebrating between November 22 and 25 will notch up reasonable success with regard to business.

Those who celebrate their birthdays between November 23 and December 1 are in for a romantic spring and will achieve reasonable professional success in June, al-

beit in partnership with proved friends. Wonderful business or speculative opportunities will present themselves to those born on or around December 4, for whom April will bring ample chance for romantic associations. December 8 and 9 are birthdays indicative of intense business activity in May. They will make a lot of new friends, a lot of them fairly young.



CAPRICORN (December 23—January 20)

Your first sign is Capricorn, your ruling planet is Saturn, your most favourable day is Saturday, your lucky colour is dark green and your lucky gem is the turquoise.

Those born between January 1 and 4 (especially if born at sunrise) will be troubled by sudden upheavals, of which the worst type will be domestic. The 5th and 6th are birthdays which are generally favourable, but those born on these two dates should keep their wits about them.

It will be a most exciting year for those born between January 6 and 9. They will have to put in a lot of hard work to expand their businesses or to further their respective careers. Hard work in May and June will bring rewards in or around September. For children, the period between July and October will be particularly fruitful. The remainder of the year is likely to bring in its wake some serious matrimonial disturbances.

Those celebrating the remaining birthdays are advised to guard against deception and over-optimism. Extravagance in January and April should be avoided scrupulously and special attention should be paid to professional details in the month of November, bringing excellent opportunities for business expansion for those born between April 24 and 25. These opportunities if taken will bring in sudden and unexpected gains in autumn and relatives will be extremely helpful and cooperative.



AQUARIUS (January 21—February 19)

Your solar sign is Aquarius, your ruling planet is Saturn, your most favourable day is Saturday, your lucky colour is light green and your lucky gem is the amethyst.

Those born on January 21 and 24 are in for an exacting year. The year will start by encountering rivalry or opposition to personal beliefs in January.

Those celebrating January 25 and 26 will combine business and pleasure successfully in February and will come in for a lot of gain

in October. During the rest of the year they will occupy themselves with travelling and for some, successful advertising. The remaining January birthdays presage happy romance in March, frequently resulting in a marriage by the end of the year.

August will be a month of change and travel for the majority of those whose birthdays fall on February 7 and 10. They are likely to strike up new friendships with young interesting people who will help in furthering business and professional interests. Those celebrating birthdays on February 11th and 12th will do a lot of travelling thanks to the cooperation of relatives. February 14 is a birthday presaging a great deal of business activity in the month of January.



PISCES (February 20—March 20)

Your solar sign is Pisces, your ruling planet is Jupiter, your most fortunate day is Thursday, your lucky gem is bloodstone.

Those born under this star will experience their fair share of ups and downs this year.

On the other hand, for the majority of those born under this star, 1980 will be fairly memorable on account of some new friendships, or strengthening of other acquaintances. Those celebrating February 20 may encounter determined opposition from elders and partners but will nevertheless experience a fair deal of good fortune in January. Those born between February 21 and 23 prosper either directly or indirectly through various sources.

January and July could be particularly trying months for those celebrating birthdays on February 24, 25 and 26. Those born on the last two dates are advised to be careful in the month of June. However, they would do well to further their business interests and love affairs to the best of their efforts in October. This will be a period of unusual circumstances, and people will tend to make the most of these changes.

Those born between March 1 and 8 will prosper in January, especially those born on March 5. January will see a great deal of new friendships. Those born between March 9 and 12 will prosper in February, while those who are born on March 13 are likely to be successful in March.

Those born on March 14 and 15 will have a very successful month. Birthdays on

M. B. RAMAN

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028

Beginning January 27

This week the Sun and Mercury are in Capricorn, Venus and Ketu are in Aquarius, Mars, Jupiter and Rahu are conjoined in Leo, Saturn alone is in Virgo and Neptune and Uranus are in Scorpio. The Moon will be moving through Gemini and Cancer from Taurus.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) You will make financial gains in unexpected ways. Property deals will favour you.

Partnership ventures will also prosper. Your relatives and friends will praise your efforts. Adopt novel and original ideas in business. These will bear fruit. Womenfolk are advised not to write any confidential letters or sign any agreement this week. Good dates: 27, 28, 31 and 2. Lucky numbers: 3 and 9. Favourable direction: West.



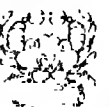
TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) Seek and act upon the advice of elderly people. Beware of disputes with those in authority and young people.

Guard yourself against threat or trickery. Businessmen should be careful about undertaking contracts or signing agreements. Your financial position will improve rapidly. Social activities and sound health are forecast. Good dates: 28, 30, 31 and 1. Lucky numbers: 9 and 11. Favourable direction: South.



GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) A good week in many respects. Make hay while the sun shines. You may have to go on an unexpected journey.

Discussion with others, will lead to good decisions. This week is favourable for love and matrimonial affairs. Friends will be cordial and helpful. You will win legal suits pending in courts and gain in sports. You must be ready to play the host and render help to your nearest relatives and close friends. Some may get promotion and transfer orders. Good dates: 27, 29, 31 and 2. Lucky numbers: 2 and 7. Favourable directions: West



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) If you think and take steps in the right directions, everything will move smoothly. Don't stoop to make

easy money by gambling and betting. You will find opportunities to attend parties and entertain yourself. A good time for lovers. Letters will bring good news. A lucky period for businessmen. Keep away from bad company and do not be misguided by the vain utterances of your comrades. Good dates: 29, 30, 1 and 2. Lucky numbers: 5 and 8. Favourable direction: South.



LEO (July 23 — August 22) You will have to struggle hard to keep promises you have made. Some will get

and promotions, others may be transferred in their jobs. Some members of the family will buy new clothes, jewels and costly presents. The weekend will be merry. Some will reach a favourable solution in property matters. Letters will bring good news. Someone in your family will land you in a tight spot. Medical expenses are on the cards. Good dates: 31, 1 and 2. Lucky numbers: 3 and 6. Favourable direction: South.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) The beginning of the week will find you busy. You will have untimely

meals and also spend sleepless nights. Help from others and their support will help you to solve some problems. Value their suggestions. However, you will be able to satisfy your family's wants. Some will gain in sports, speculation and betting. Don't go in for new ventures. Good dates: 28, 29 and 31. Lucky numbers: 1 and 7. Favourable directions: West and East.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) A good week for businessmen to make profits and sign new agreements.

Financially, you will achieve success only at the end of the year. No family problem is there to trouble you. Differences, if any with your colleagues are likely to be patched up in your favour. The weekend will be enjoyable. A good week for love and matrimonial affairs. Take care of your health and avoid betting and gambling. Good dates: 27, 28, 31 and 2. Lucky numbers: 3 and 6. Favourable direction: North-west.



SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) This week more than average success is predicted. Your financial position improves rapidly. There is a

chance of promotion and transfer. You are very close to your cherished goal. You will make new friends. Children and young friends will contribute to your happiness. Love and matrimonial affairs will prove fruitful. Give importance to domestic issues. Good dates: 29, 31, 1 and 2. Lucky numbers: 4 and 7. Favourable direction: South.



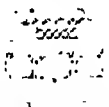
SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22)

A new friendship will bring happiness. Do not arouse the hostility of employers and those in authority. Curb erratic tendencies in business, family and social matters. Tone up your nerves and check extravagance. Safeguard your health and that of your family. Speculation and gambling will pay rich dividends. Letters will bring good news. Good dates: 27, 28, 30 and 2. Lucky numbers: 1 and 9. Favourable directions: East and North.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) This will be a week of mixed fortunes. Make full use of all opportunities

which present themselves. Attend to your business and be watchful in love and domestic matters. Choose friends of the opposite sex with care and discretion. You must forge ahead on all fronts. Beneficial changes, travel and improved health are portended. Your enemies are on the prowl. Good dates: 29, 30 and 31. Lucky numbers: 6 and 4. Favourable direction: South.



AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) This

week calls for utmost care, tact and circumspection in all your dealings. A new romantic friendship is probable. Adopt original ideas in business or in your professional career. Medical expenditure is foreseen in the family. Do not be misguided by suggestions of friends and relatives. Good dates: 29, 31, 1 and 2. Lucky numbers: 1 and 10. Favourable direction: North-west.



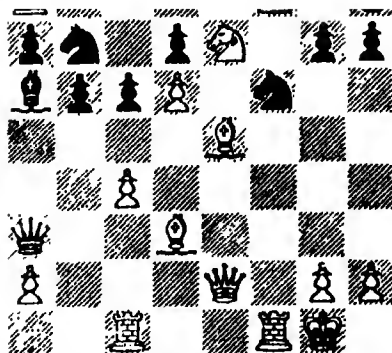
PISCES (February 20 — March 20) A lady in family may cause unexpected anxiety — others, however, will

contribute to your well-being and happiness. This week is favourable for finance and properly deals with estate agents and lawyers. Secret matters are especially well-signified. New friends and elderly relatives will prove helpful. Seek and act upon the advice of elders. Good dates: 31, 1 and 2. Lucky numbers: 10 and 6. Favourable directions: East and South-west.

M. B. RAMAN

chess

Hübner (Black)



Spassky (White) to play

Position after Black's 21st move

GAME OF THE MONTH features the promised encounter between Spassky and Hübner from the Munich tournament about which I wrote a couple of weeks ago. This game was played in the last round of the tournament, which Hübner was at the time leading. Spassky was a point behind, having just been through a sticky patch during which he had lost one game and very nearly lost another. Hübner on the other hand was not only unbeaten, but had not even been in danger of defeat in any of his previous games. So 'form' certainly favoured the German grandmaster, but in such tight situations where everything hinges on one game the psychological factors are of much greater importance. In the event Spassky rose to the occasion, dramatically so. A leading grandmaster once remarked to me, 'When Spassky is playing at his best, he executes without a trifle.' Certainly, as it turned out, Hübner would have stood more chance in the hands of the Aytollah Khomeini himself.

White B Spassky Black R Hübner
Munich 1979 Nimzo-Indian Defence
1. P-O4, N-KB3; 2. P-QB4, P-K3; 3. N-QB3, B-N5; 4. P-K3, P-QN3; 5. N-K2, B-R3; 6. N-N3, O-O; 7. P-K4, N-B3; 8. B-Q3. A well-known trap—if 8... N x QP then 9. Q-R4, B x N+, 10 P x B and White wins a piece.

8... P-K4; 9. P-Q5, N-OR4; 10. Q-K2, B x N+; 11. P x B, P-B3; 12. N-B5, N-K1. He dare not allow the unbreakable pin B-N5.
13. P-B4, Q-B27. After this, natural-looking move, Black's game goes uncontrollably downhill. Better was 13... P-B3 holding back White's centre.

14. P x P, Q x P; 15. O-O1, P-B3. Too late, but 15... Q x BP lost outright to 16 B-N2, Q-N5; 17 N-R6+, P x N; 18 O-N+; 16. B-B41, Q x BP; 17. QR-B1, Q-R6; 18. P-QB1. This point of White's pawn sacrifice Black's pieces are temporarily locked out of play.

18... N-N2; 19. N-K7+, K-R1; 20. P-K5, P x P; 21. B x P, N-B3; (DIAGRAM) 22. B x RP!! Very finely calculated. If 22... K x B, 23 R-QB3, Q-B4+; 24 K-R1 the threat of R-KR3+ is impossible to parry, while after 22... N x B, 23 B x P+1, K x B; 24 O-N4+, K-R1, 25 N-N6+, K-N2; 26 N x R+ etc Black's king is completely denuded of protection.

22... N x QP! The only chance.
23. Q-KB27! Here Spassky gets rather carried away by his own romanticism. The mundane retreat 23 B-N1 would have left

Black quite defenceless.

23... N-N5? Missing his one chance.
23... N x B when I see no clear win for White.

24. Q-Q4, Q-KB+; 25. Q x Q, R x R+; 26. R x R, N x Q; 27. R-B3, N-B1! Apparently a saving move. 28. B-N6!! But no. After 28... N x N; 29 B-B7 there is no way to avert mate (28... N-N5; 29 R-R3+, N-R3; 30. R x N mate) so Black resigned. A game worth replaying.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

IN THE COURSE of the bidding your partner incapably drops an honour card on the table. Do you know the ruling? If so, you may be able to find the answer to a problem that arose during the last American Life-masters Pairs. You are West and the bidding has gone:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
2♥	—	1♠	2♦
3♦	No	3♣	No
6♥	No	No	No

Your hand is.

♠ 8 6 3
♥ 6
♦ A J 8 7 6
♣ 10 9 6 4

On the first round you were unable to take any action because your partner had dropped the Ace of clubs on the table. You had to pass for one round. Now it is your turn to lead, and the declarer, exercising one of his options, bars a club lead. So what do you do?

John Mohan, playing with Eddie Kantar, found the right answer. This was the full hand.

Dealer, North N-S vulnerable.

♠ A J 7 5 4		♥ Q 9
♥ J 5		♦ 7 4 3
♦ Q		♣ K 10 9 5 4 3
♠ K Q 7 5 3		♠ A J
♠ 8 6 3	N	
♥ 6	W	
♦ A J 8 7 6	E	
♣ 10 9 6 4	S	
		♠ K 10 2
		♥ A K Q 10 9 8 2
		♦ 2
		♣ 8 2

The bidding by North-South, I am sure you will agree, was less than Life-masterly. It is usually better to open One Club rather than One Spade with 5-5 in the black suits; North's reverse at the Three level was unsound on his values; South might have launched the 'old Black' on the second round, and North's Five Hearts was unjustified.

Reverting to the feed, Mohan chose a low diamond. Kantar won with the King and cashed his Ace of clubs to defeat the contract. You see why it was essential to lead a low diamond, not the Ace? The prohibition against leading a club exists so long as the lead is retained. If West had led ♦ A he would have been unable to lead a club at trick 2, and South might have discarded his club losers on dummy's spades.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



FOUR YEARS AGO the people of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, the British Pacific colony, agreed to separate into the two original geographical groups preparatory to their becoming independent. The Ellice Islanders revived the traditional name for their group, Tuvalu, and the first stamps bearing this name were issued on 1 January 1976, the official date of the separation. Since then Tuvalu has issued some attractive series featuring life in the islands, local crafts and sea creatures. This 50-cents stamp is one of several showing fishermen at work. Tuvalu runs its own philatelic service to provide new issues and first day covers at face value. The address is: Philatelic Bureau, GPO, Funafuti, Tuvalu, Central Pacific. Some of the early issues, notably the \$5 stamp in the 1976 definitive series, are already sold out.

C. W. HILL

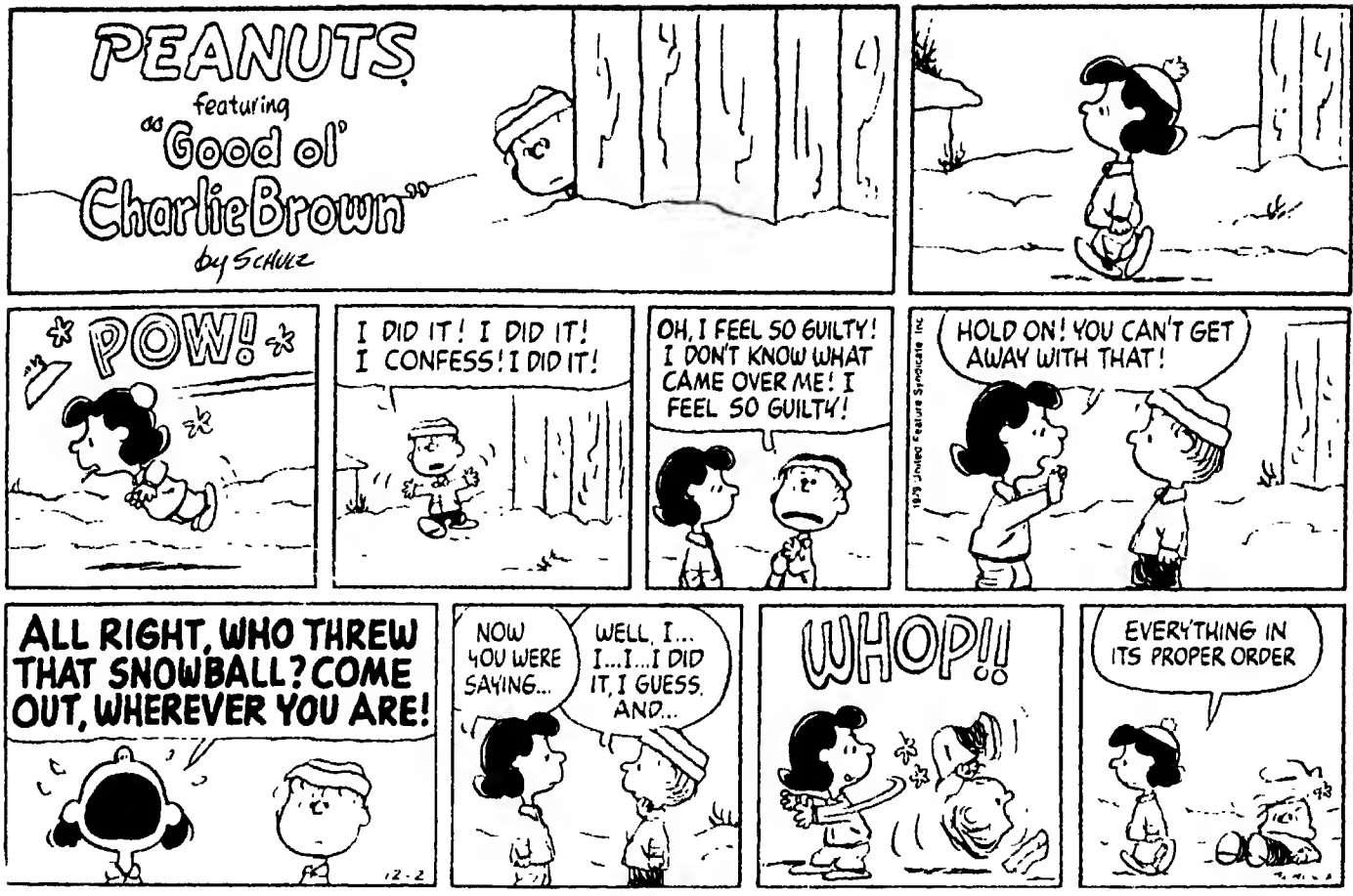
quiz

QUESTIONS

1. What is the City?
2. What was the Amritsar Massacre?
3. What was the Freie Bühne?
4. What is the Gay Liberation Front?
5. What is Insulin?
6. When was the Irgun Zvai Leumi founded?
7. What is foehn?
8. What is laser the acronym of?

1. The name given to the square mile of London which has traditionally housed one of the world's major financial centres.
2. It is another name for the Gallenwallah Bagh massacre of April 15, 1919.
3. A play producing organisation founded in Berlin by Otto Brahm in 1889 to pioneer naturalistic drama.
4. An organisation of practising homosexuals founded in USA on January 27, 1969.
5. It is the hormone secreted by the pancreas.
6. The armed extremist Jewish organisation was founded in 1937.
7. A warm, dry wind on the lee-side of a mountain range.
8. Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation.

ANSWERS



Nestlings must leave the nest



Till yesterday he never came home without a scraped knee or a torn shirt. Today he is off. Already men. Trying to swallow the lump in his throat and smile at his mother.

He must equip himself to be an adult in an adult world. Fight his own battles, chalk up his own achievements. Aren't you glad that you saved for this day? Even while he clamoured for a football and cried for roller skates you were putting aside a little money every month for

his future as a doctor, an engineer, a lawyer, whatever he chose to be. He has chosen. And your Canara Bank Kamadhenu Deposit has multiplied your money to four times its size in the years. And you watch, proud, happy and sad, as he sets out to meet the world on his own terms. A little fatherly foresight. And what a lot of satisfaction.

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DEAR Hanuman, where are you hiding? Return home. Madam will not say anything — Charansingh — From the Personal Column of *Statesman* (N. R. Shekhar, Calcutta).

SAHARSA : He taught her, fell in love with her, eloped with her and then they ended their lives like love-born hero and heroine in a film. Police recovered their bodies from the house of the Ram Chandra Singh of Hatiagachi railway crossing mohalla here.

Allauddin and Noorie developed fascination for each other in their village Majhaul in Begusarai district. The young man was her tutor. He came over to Saharsa to do B. Ed. Later he brought her to this place and kept her in a hotel. The relatives of the girl, however, recovered her from the hotel and put her in the house of Ram Chandra Singh, a co-villager, living here. Allauddin came to know of it. He pedalled to the house, stormed into it and allegedly killed his 'Noorie' with a dagger and killed himself too. — *Indian Nation* (Shyamali, Patna).

PUNE : A well-attired person posing as police inspector in mufti and his female accomplice walked away with a silver crown weighing 20 tolas from a temple in Ganj Peth here. The temple pujari in a complaint lodged with the police said the couple asked him to bring change for a ten-rupee note from a nearby shop so that they could offer some coins to the deity. The unsuspecting pujari returned only to find that the couple had vanished along with the crown of the deity.—*The Pioneer* (Hemu Shah, Lucknow).

TIRUCHI : Mr K. Murugayyan, the defeated CPI candidate in Nagappattinam (SC) Lok Sabha seat in Thanjavur district was perhaps the only MP whose term proved to be short-lived. In the dissolved Lok Sabha he was a member only for two months and a

few days. Mr Murugayyan was elected from the Nagappattinam (SC) Lok Sabha seat in the by-election held on June 17, last year, following the murder of Mr S. G. Murugayyan, the CPI leader. The Lok Sabha was dissolved on August 22 last year and Mr K. Murugayyan's term ended then. *Indian Express* (Syed Muthahar Saqaf, Killai).

SIMLA : About 5,000 voters of the Kangra parliamentary constituency put the stamp on their palms instead of their ballot papers and inserted them in the ballot box. This was disclosed to reporters here today by Mr Sat Mahajan, MLA and former President of the Congress (I) in Himachal Pradesh. Of about 7,000 invalid votes in this constituency about 5,000 ballot papers were reportedly found blank. Asked if he had seen stamped palms Mr Mahajan said he had seen two or three. Asked to elaborate how it happened he said that Congress (I) workers had popularized at campaign meetings a slogan: "Jaat per na paat per Indira ki baat per, mohr lagegi hath per". And so the voters stamped their palms.—*Statesman* (Sushanto Mukerjee Delhi)

LUCKNOW : The strange case of a seven-year-old boy, Malin Joseph, a pupil of Class II, being abducted by his own father while being taken to school by his grandfather, has been reported to the police.— *Blitz* (Rudra Dutta Satapathi, Rourkela).

MADRAS : An elderly woman mistook a polling booth for a place where kerosene was being distributed to consumers at a fair price. The woman entered a polling booth located in a Corporation School in Mylapore Bazaar Road with an empty tin in her hand and joined the queue soon after polling commenced. She, however, realised within a few minutes that people had collected at the school to cast their votes in the Lok Sabha election and withdrew from the place with a blush — *Hindu* (S. Varadarajan, Bhilai)

HYDERABAD : An upper division clerk in a State Government office here created a minor sensation by declaring himself Inram Mehdi who according to a prediction by Prophet Mohammed, would be born in the world to save his devotees on the eve of the deluge. Fifty-year-old Shah Ali, working in the Mine and Geology Department did so soon after the Friday prayers at Mecca Masjid when he started addressing the devotees according to City Police Commissioner P. V. Pavithran. Police later sent Shah Ali to the mental hospital for a check-up. *Indian Express* (A. Balagangadharan, Madras)

I CAN'T understand a country like America being so afraid of the Soviet Union. I don't know whether they have an inferiority complex or what it is—Mrs Gandhi in an interview to Jonathan Power of the *Washington Post*

WE do not turn towards Russia but Russia is turning towards us—Indira Gandhi on the crisis in Afghanistan

IF Jimmy were to leave that (telephone) hot line for one minute, anything could happen between Iran, Russia...—Mrs Lilian Carter

WHAT can I do if Chaudhury sahab listens more to all these pro-Russian people—Raj Naran

IF war breaks out in Afghanistan, everyone will be destroyed: Afghanistan, Punjab (meaning Pakistan) and Hindustan — Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan

HOWEVER big Mrs Gandhi's victory may have been, we shall not allow her men to launch another rule of Mastaans—Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal

I WOULD like to meet him and offer my help if he wants it—A. B. Gani Khan Chowdhury, Central Energy and Irrigation minister

SEVENTYFIVE percent of the people of Pakistan are illiterate. Do you expect illiterates to decide for themselves what is good and what is bad for them? Somebody else has to tell them—General Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan

FORGET your Western ideals and your Western standards of freedom and democracy. You are in a Muslim developing country. And Islam says that if somebody says anything about your integrity against your religion, against your everything, chop him—teach him a lesson—General Zia-ul-Haq to American correspondents speaking about Pakistan's political prisoners.

IF they (the courts) find Sanjay guilty, presumably he will go to jail—Mrs Gandhi.

TIME makes an ass of most of us. So do voters.—*Statesman*.

I HOLD my mother (Mrs Vijaya Raje Scindia) in utmost respect. As a mother she has the right to criticise me in whatever manner she likes. But as a son, I do not have the right to speak a single word against her — Madhavrao Scindia

JEANS symbolise the bum and crotch culture—Ayatollah Khomeini



C. M. Stephen with Sanjay Gandhi

ALL IN DEFENCE

SEVERAL interpretations are being given for Mrs Indira Gandhi keeping the Defence portfolio with herself. One of them is that she has kept this portfolio for Mr H. N. Bahuguna who may be inducted in the Central Cabinet after this session of the Lok Sabha. Another one is that she wants to give this portfolio to Mr C. M. Stephen, who will be contesting a by election from Gulbarga constituency of Karnataka. But knowledgeable sources give another version. According to these sources she will keep Defence with her because she wants to do a thorough review of all defence contracts, especially of the Jaguar deal. The theory given by these sources is that if an open inquiry is ordered, it may stink of an attitude of revenge. But she, as Defence Minister, can go through all the files and order an official inquiry if necessary.

NO BOUQUETS FOR THE CHAUDHURY

THOSE were the silly days. The Congress (U)-Lok Dal alliance had disintegrated. On December 23, 1979, one of the Congress (U) youth leaders went to the then Prime Minister's residence. He was carrying a message from the AICC (U) office. After reaching the Chaudhury's residence he came to know that December 23 was Mr Singh's birthday. He rushed back

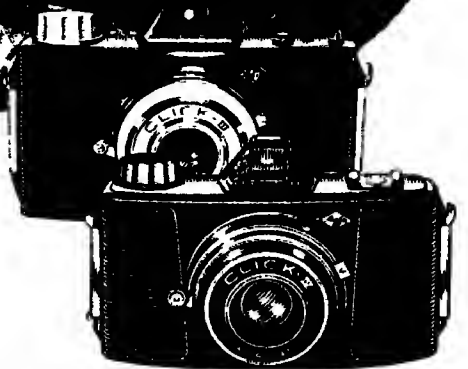
to the office and asked Mr Natrajan, joint secretary AICC (U), to send a bouquet to Chaudhury Charan Singh because at the Centre the Congress (U) was still a partner of the Lok Dal. But Mr Natrajan was not ready to act on his own. So he booked a lightning call to Bangalore: he wanted permission from Mr Devaraj Urs to send one bouquet to the Chaudhury. But Mr Urs was not in Bangalore so the call was transferred to Calcutta where Mr Urs was campaigning for his Party. What happened after that one does not know. But that young man waited for hours and hours at the AICC (U) office for the green signal. And in the end Mr Natrajan refused to send the bouquet to the Chaudhury.

DEATH WISH ?

PARTIES who work with a death wish can never succeed at the polls. This was proved by the Lok Dal. Apart from a bad selection of candidates, and absurd publicity, all Lok Dal leaders were also trying to defeat each other. The most glaring example is that of Mr Ramashankar Singh who fought on the Lok Dal ticket from Bhind constituency of Madhya Pradesh. Ramashankar Singh who was the symbol of the struggle against feudal and money politics, was pitted against the formidable Janata candidate, Raja Sahab Machand, and Pandit Kaicharan Sharma of the Congress (I). Ramashankar Singh was the energetic leader who had openly come out against the Gwa-

lior family and Birla management on the issue of the firing at Gwalior Rayon. At that time Mr Singh was a Minister in the Saklecha Ministry, but even then he had addressed a striking workers' rally at the gate of the factory. After that he had kept on his crusade against the palace, the RSS and the Birlas. He paid the price; he was thrown out of his Ministry. Ramashankar Singh was one of the main political enemies of the RSS in Madhya Pradesh and they were concentrating on defeating him. Ramashankar Singh had virtually nothing going for him in his election campaign. But what did his Party bosses do from the headquarters? One of the secretaries of the Lok Dal saw to it that Mr Singh could not get posters and financial aid from the central office. Not only that, one of the trusted lieutenants of Mr Raj Narain wanted to ensure the defeat of Mr Singh. He put up another SYS boy from this constituency just to make a dent in Ramashankar Singh's base. One crony of Raj Narain, who was one of the election managers of Raj Narain, went all the way to Bhind from Varanasi to canvass for that Independent candidate who could not get even 20,000 votes. But he was successful in his mission: Ramashankar Singh lost to the Congress (I) candidate by a very narrow margin. The Raj Narain saboteur had done enough to get the Lok Dal defeated.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN



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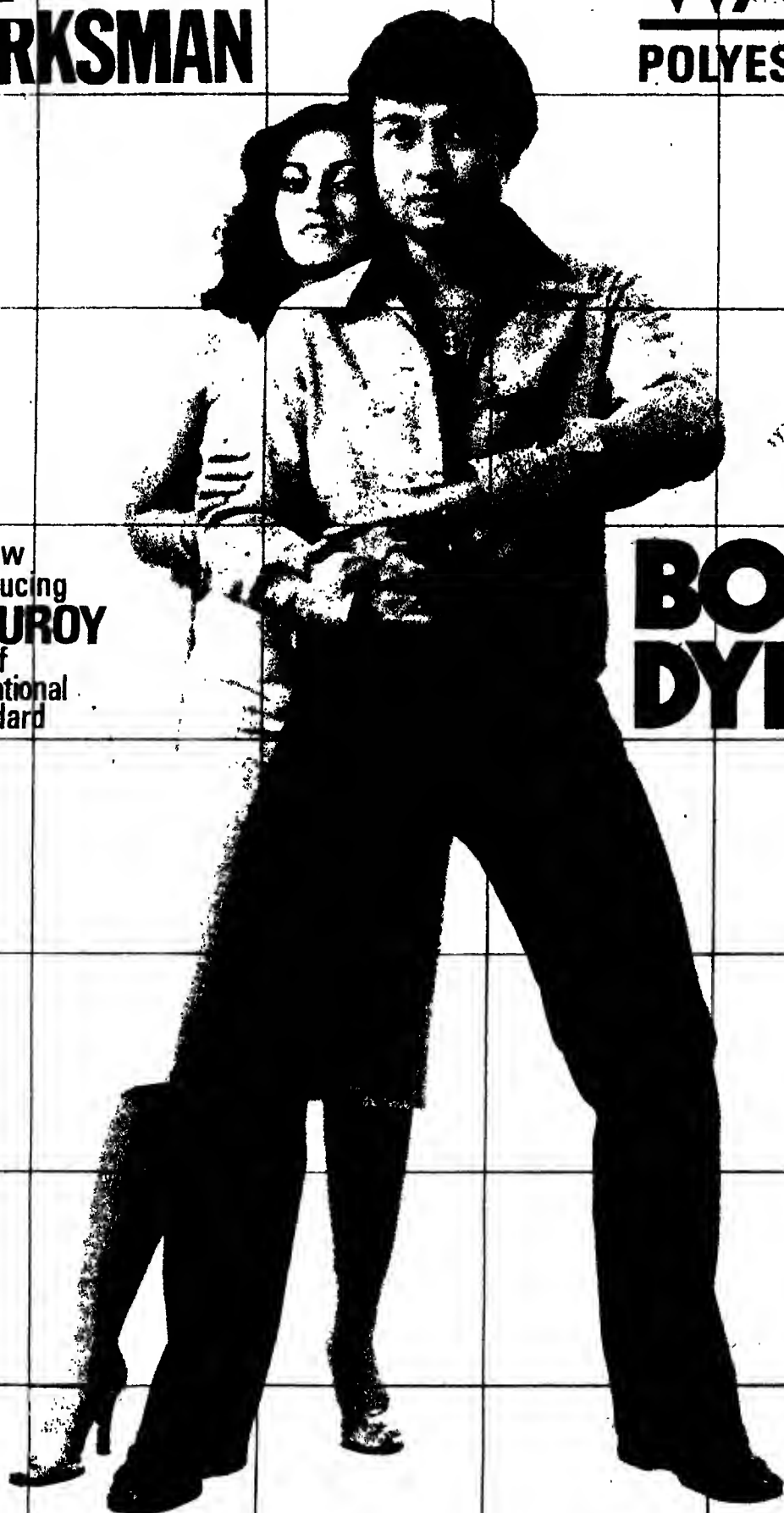
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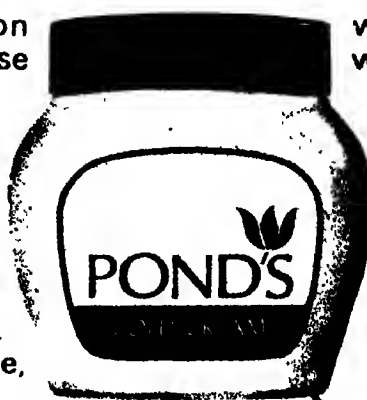
**Ali writes
on Prayer**





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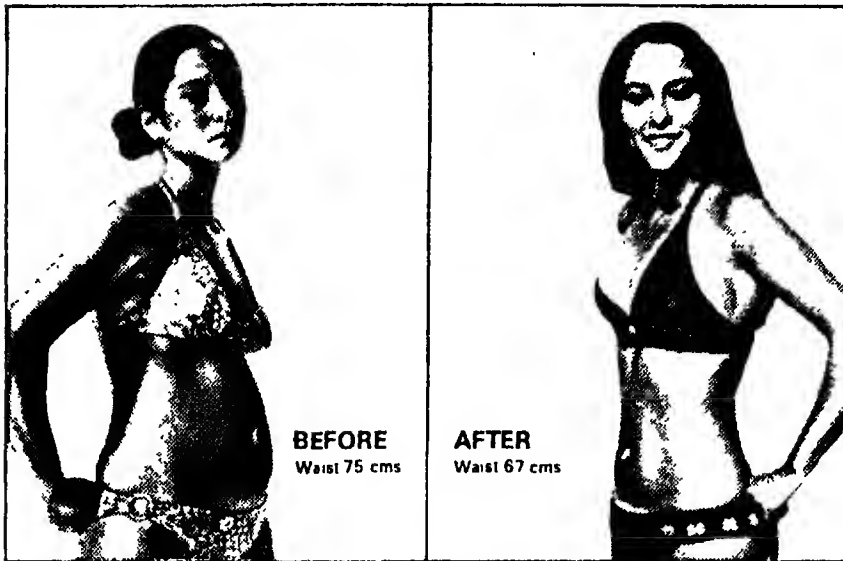
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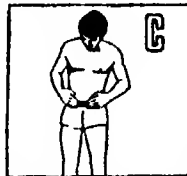
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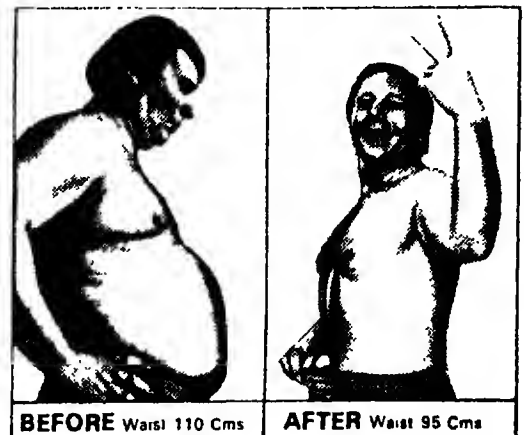
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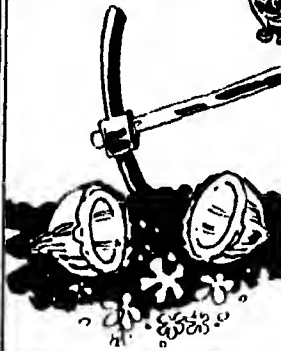
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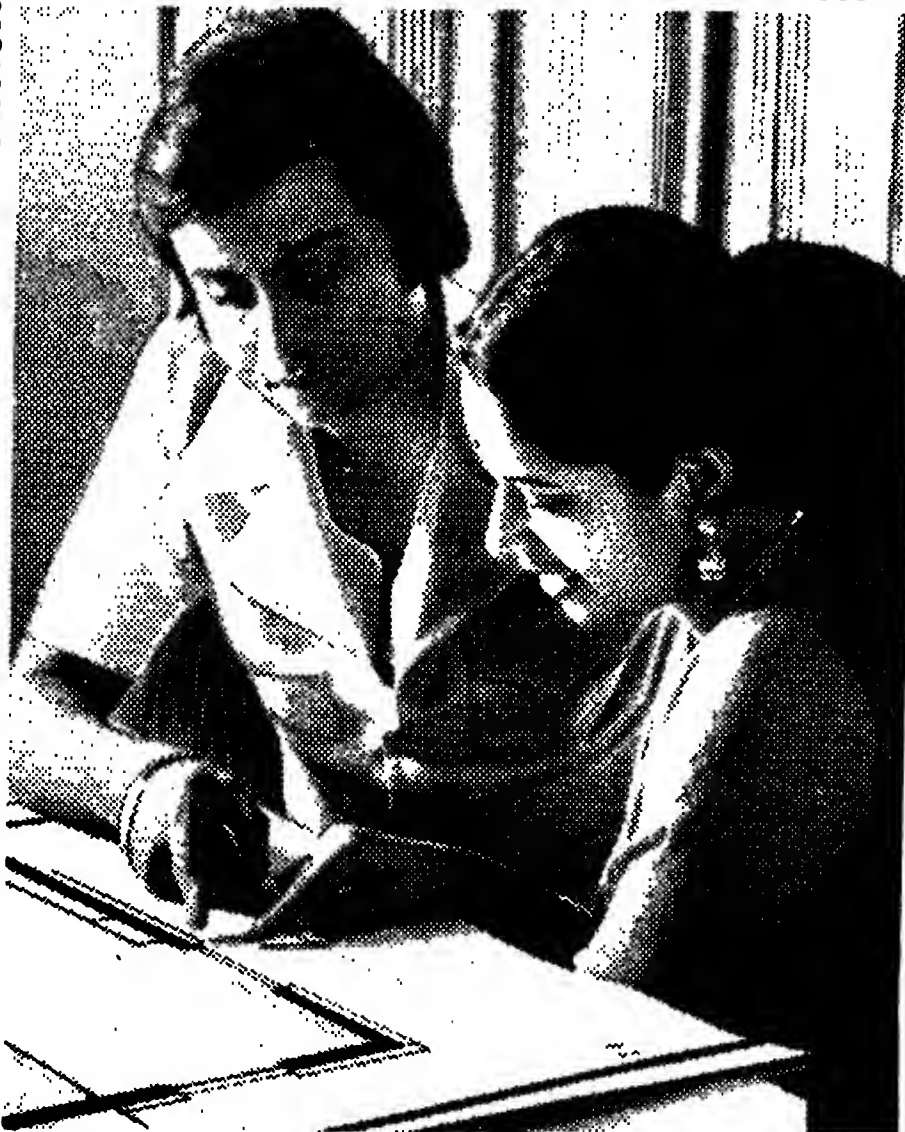
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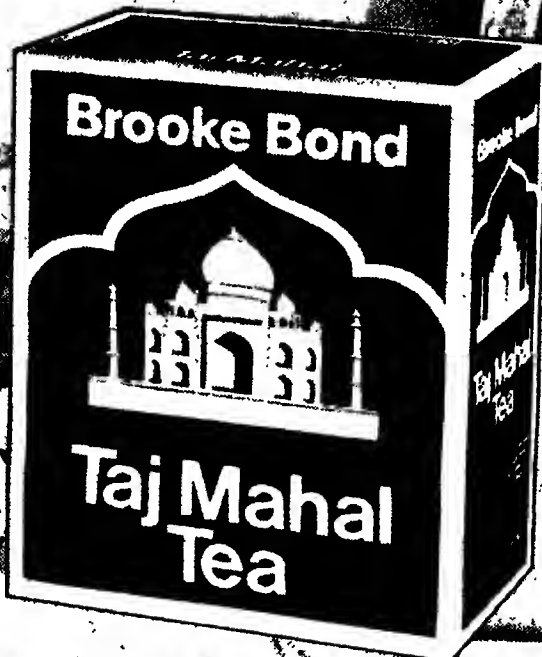
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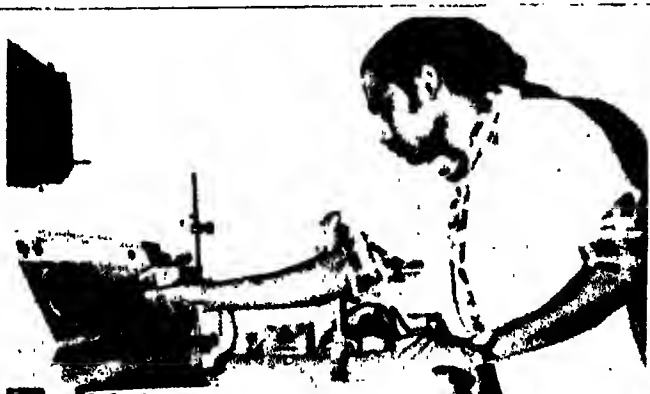
BB 9925R



Indira Gandhi is facing a challenge in Assam: to solve an intractable problem, that of illegal immigrants, as also that of regional and separatist forces. This is a challenge only she can take up. And time is running out because many Indians in Assam who do not speak Assamese are under severe attack.



Muhammad Ali fought and vanquished the best boxers in the world in his 19-year span at the top. But now Ali's enemies are poverty, misery and oppression. Read Ali's philosophy in an exclusive article by The Greatest himself. Also a report on Ali's unique meeting with the PM and how he was mobbed at Jama Masjid, Delhi.



Indian science has taken great leaps, especially in the recent past. This is evident from the recent scientific discovery in the field of biochemistry at the Regional Research Laboratory in Hyderabad. The find and the isolation of a protein was done by a group of Indian scientists, although the Western Press ignored the big Indian role.

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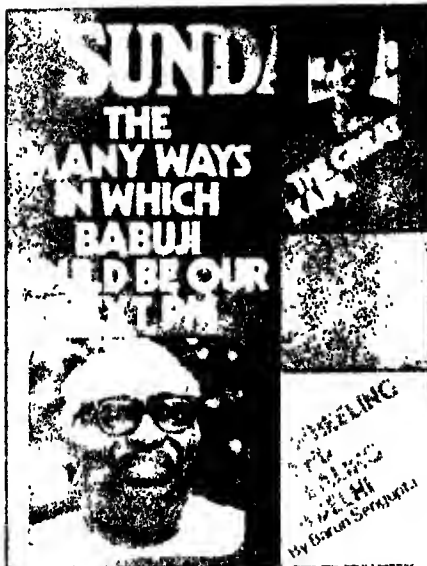
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Cover transparency of Assam picketers by Subir Roy and of Muhammad Ali by Alok Mitra.

Editor M. J. Akbar

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David McMahon, Saumitra Banerjee, Tirthankar Ghosh, S. N. M. Abdi
Delhi Correspondent Ajoy Bose
Art Director Bipul Guha Asst Art Director Amiya Bhattacharva



Great expose

THANK you for the extracts from Barun Sengupta's book "The Last Days of the Morarji Raj". Indeed, SUNDAY has gone a long way in helping to expose the true nature of our unprincipled politicians. Leaders like Biju Patnaik, Raj Narain and many others denounce Sanjay Gandhi in public although they attach a great deal of importance to him in secret. Their dealings with the "Enfant Terrible" of the Emergency show exactly how shallow their beliefs are. Even their very speeches are superficial. All things must change and the time will come when these same power-hungry people will be driven from the pillars of prestige only to be dumped in the abyss of disdain and disgrace.

Shankar Narayan Malik, Puri.

HATS OFF to Barun Sengupta and SUNDAY. But, coming as it did on the eve of the election, the revelations only served to heighten the quandary of the voters. The least of the three evils seemed to be Jagjivan Ram's Janata, even though one cannot help but detest the underhand political dealings of the master defector who goes by the name of Babuji. S. S. Bhagavatula, Madras.

Paper tigers

AT the close of the Delhi Test, it became patently clear that there was nothing special about the visiting team. It is our own journalists who exaggerated their cricketing capabilities and predicted that they would slaughter us. It is strange because the tourists are amply equipped in every department, but it seems

Bowled over

THANK YOU for publishing the day-to-day proceedings of the Test matches between India and Pakistan. The detailed coverage was wonderful. In addition, the article "The Great Kapil" by David McMahon was excellent. Dwarikanath Tripathy, Puri.

THE profile of Kapil Dev was very readable. This great all-rounder deserves all the praise he has been getting. Yet another milestone in his career came when he surpassed Garth McKenzie's record of the most Test wickets in a calendar year. It is just as well that more all-rounders have been brought into the Test side as this will ease the pressure on Kapil and will also lead to his being used more economically. Karsan Ghavri and Roger Binny are providing good support and we wish him all the best

in his future appearances for India. K. J. Ranganath, Bangalore.

THE coverage of the Indo-Pak series between India and Pakistan has really been delightful. The article on Kapil Dev was a true portrayal of the great all-rounder, who has given everything for his team. P. C. Tripathy, Puri.

DAVID McMAHON'S tribute to Kapil Dev was both stylish and informed. Indian cricket is now getting the Press it deserves. Tarit Dutta, Calcutta.

KAPIL DEV is a superstar not only because of his cricketing achievements but more so because he is a shining example to young toilers like me. Your photographs along with the article by David McMahon inspire hope in the hearts of millions of cricket fans. May Kapil play long. Ramesh Kumar Ratnaja, Aurangabad.

Hate thy neighbour

I WAS pained to read about the RSS hate campaign that was directed against Mother Teresa. Being pro-Hindu does not mean being anti anything else. The world can do well without the likes of Khomeini and the RSS and communalism in every form is to be deplored. Thank you for defending Mother Teresa and her good work.

Farokh Rustom, Bombay.

FROM its very inception, SUNDAY has been trying to use every stick at its command to beat the RSS. Thus it was a surprise to see M. J. Akbar come out of his shell, though belatedly, to condemn the rising threat of Muslim communalism. What one fails to understand, however, is his attempt to paint the RSS in its goriest colours, while at the same time glossing over Muslim communalism and giving it a clean chit as a lesser evil than Hindu communalism.

Self-styled crusaders like Madhu Limaye, Raj Narain or even for that matter M. J. Akbar himself, fail to enlighten us on why, till today, communal riots occur only between Muslims and Hindus and not between other significant minority groups. Again is it not a fact that the recent riots in Hyderabad were the handiwork of a rabidly communal Muslim organisation? Of course, being gifted with a facile pen, you can concoct a story of RSS involvement in the riots. The sanest counsel to the Muslim community in this nation has come not from political mavericks like Madhu Limaye and his ilk, but from Acharya J. B. Kripalani. He advised the Muslims to fraternise with the majority community in their own as well as the nation's interest. That he has had few takers is another matter altogether.

S. Subrahmanyam, Hyderabad.

HAVING read the extracts from Barun Sengupta's book, I am convinced that Indian politicians are woefully devoid of principles. Both Jagjivan Ram and Charan Singh have an insatiable urge for power while Mrs Gandhi and her son have made a comeback to foil their best attempts. Sanjay Gandhi's talks with Raj Narain reveal the former as a loud-mouthed person and the latter as a hypocrite and a complete bluff. Barun Sengupta's book will certainly go a long way in blowing the lid off a number of politicians in this country of ours. Southik Biswas, Calcutta.

AFTER reading the extracts from the book by Barun Sengupta I am convinced that the author had tapes hidden in the mouths of Kamal Nath, Charan Singh, Biju Patnaik, Indira Gandhi and the others who figure in his investigation. How else could he have got the details of the conversations which took place behind closed doors? In a way, what the author has written is nothing new really. Everyone can guess at the bargaining that took place, and Barun Sengupta has only confirmed these suspicions. M. V. Dinesh, Calicut.

THE author deserves congratulations for his bold disclosure of facts. Shreekanth, Mysore.

that this strength is restricted to paper only.

Their bowling on this tour has depended greatly on Imran Khan, in the absence of Sarfraz Nawaz, but with Imran's injury, they were greatly handicapped in three Tests. Pakistan may hate to admit it, but they were sorely handicapped by the fact that Sarfraz did not come on the tour.

Dwakar P. Gupta, Chapra.



Light-Deep-
Cleanser!

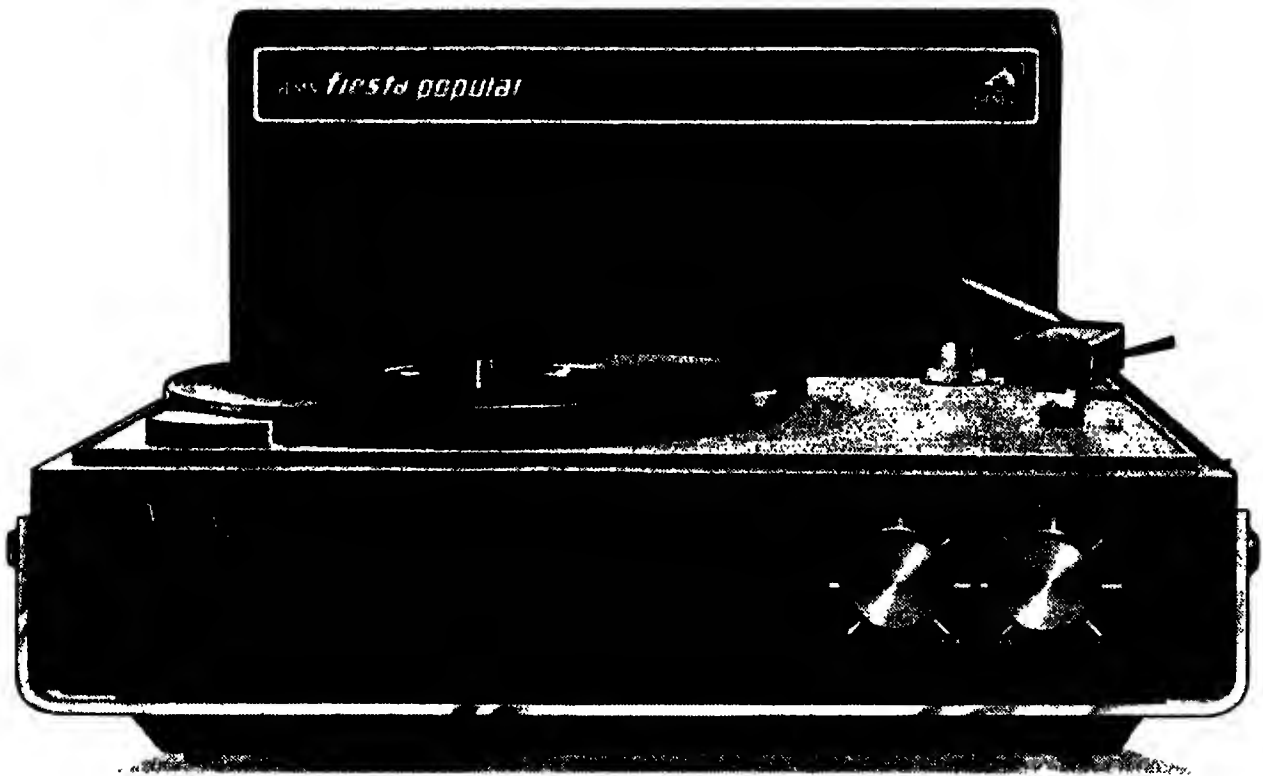
Max Factor
Cleansing
Cold Cream

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protective. Its deep-down
cleansing action makes Max
Factor Cold Cream your
closest friend. Against end-
of-the-day traces of make-up,
every-day dust and dirt, that
clog the delicate pores of
your skin. Its gentle cleansing-
protecting formula leaves
your skin soft, clean, supple.
And youthful!



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Cold Cream.

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protector—all year



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His Master's Voice
 The future is sound

GC 3365—R

THE ARTICLE "The need to stop Muslim communalism" was certainly well timed. But how many journalists are there in our country who can write with an unbiased mind and only dwell on the truth? Truly speaking, the Press and the pulpit can, if it is so desired render yeomen

service to the country by fighting against communalism. If it is not curbed early, this communal epidemic may spread and prove, in the days to come, more uncontrollable and more harmful to the integrity and cultural heritage of the people of India.
D. N. Kashyap, Calcutta.

No way

IT was ironic to read the article "The many ways in which Babuji could become our next Prime Minister" by M. J. Akbar (SUNDAY, December 16). Now perhaps we can expect to see a sequel to that in one of your future issues, the theme being "The many ways in which Babuji can enjoy a retired political life".

Sree Kumar, Bangalore.

REGARDLESS of who has swept the polls in this election, I am sure that Jagjivan Ram can never be made Prime Minister of this country.
M. S. Prasad, Nellore.

I WOULD not personally have minded had Babu Jagjivan Ram become the PM but it is the upper classes who will not tolerate him. It is perhaps fitting however, that Mrs Gandhi has been returned to power, as she will never declare another Emergency.
B. A. Vadhood, Mettupalayam.

ALTHOUGH the cover story was a fair assessment, I doubt whether

Babuji is loyal to the Party he leads. My opinion is irrespective of the fact that he is a good administrator. His defection from the Congress to form a new Party was with the express intention of furthering his own political ambitions. Unfortunately he has failed in this regard and subsequent developments did not provide him the opportunity of becoming the Prime Minister. But Babuji should not give up hopes of the coveted position.
Prahlad Ghosh, Calcutta.

WITH the strong caste prejudices that prevail in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, it is almost impossible for Jagjivan Ram to become the Prime Minister of India. Moreover, he has only served to heighten his own unpopularity after his son Suresh Kumar's scandal with Sushma.

Though Babuji has vast political experience, he has started losing his grip recently. Time will tell whether he can become the next PM. And of course, the electorate too.
B. N. Bose, Jamshedpur.

Irrational judgement

L. K. Advani's indictment of President Reddy, "President Reddy is guilty" (December 16) is irrational and biased. I find the President guilty for other reasons. Our Constitution is based on the British model. The Congress led by Mr Chavan moved a no-confidence motion against the Janata Government led by Mr Morarji Desai. Instead of facing the motion, Mr Desai resigned and accepted that he did not have a majority in the House. According to convention the leader of the Opposition must be called to form a Government and thus Mr Chavan was called. When he regretted his inability what should the President have done? He should have dissolved the House, and ordered fresh elections.

P. Viswanathan, Madras.

"ALL constitutional and legal pundits were unanimous that after the resignation of Mr Charan Singh on August 20, 1979, the President should have invited Mr Jagjivan Ram to form a Government" is a wishful assumption on the part of L. K. Advani (December 16). If the President would have done so the largest single Party could have played havoc with the Parliamentary system, if it demanded the right to rule again and again in spite of its failure to secure a stable majority.

S. A. Veerapandian, Thanjavur.

A correction

The caption to the photograph on page 49 of SUNDAY (January 20) should have read "Rajasthani women dancing at 12 Willingdon Crescent". We deeply regret the error; our special apologies to those who have been personally hurt by it.

Another lost valley

SUNDAY fought to save the virgin forest of the Silent Valley and I draw the attention of readers to the auctioning of trees from forests in the Uttar Khand area of UP. The Chipko activists of Tehri Garhwal district are offering resistance to this thoughtless feeling of green trees in the catchment areas of rivers. Every year unnecessary tension is created in these border areas of the Himalayas. The demand for a ban on the felling of green trees in the badly mauled ecology of this region is highly justified. According to a recent analysis of satellite photographs of this area, the forests cover only about 34 per cent of the total land area in this part of the country. In fact, 60 per cent is recommended by the National Forest Policy. The Himalayan forests play a crucial role in checking the destructive cycle of droughts and floods. So it is extremely important that the ruthless commercial exploitation of these forests is checked.
Bharat Dogra, Uttar Khand.

What now?

THE 1980 Lok Sabha election has been an even greater surprise than that of 1977. In the latter Mrs Gandhi wanted to get a majority to continue her Emergency measure in a constitutional form but the people rejected her completely. In this election, disputes and bickerings of other national leaders in power caused so much disgust among the people that they repudiated the promise of a strong central Government under Mrs Gandhi forgetting all the evils and excesses of the Emergency.

Now the issue is: What can a strong central Government in the present circumstances do? Anything like an Emergency is ruled out. It can only mean the pulling out of carefully thought out, practicable, firm policies and their resolute and quick implementation. Mrs Gandhi has some immediate problems which she should tackle. They are: Assam; petroleum; and the control of prices of essential commodities.

As regards Assam, the fundamental question about foreigners needs to be settled. If the people whose mother tongue is not Assamese are not to be treated as Indian citizens it will be a great blow to the Indian Constitution. On the other hand, it will require stern measures to dislodge the aggressive elements in Assam to give up their cry for getting rid of all non-Assamese.

The petroleum position is becoming more and more difficult. Besides the high rise in prices, the supply is becoming uncertain and irregular. As far as India is concerned far-reaching decisions are called for and an intensive search for oil should be carried out throughout the country. At the same time a mild and reasonable control should be enforced. Controlling of prices of essential commodities is a familiar but a very difficult matter. This should receive Mrs Gandhi's attention as early as possible.

K. Santharam, Madras.

What day?

FOR a long time I wondered why a successful English weekly magazine could not be published from Calcutta. With the advent of SUNDAY my questions had been answered. Not only was it published from this city, but it was also the best of its kind. It gave me great pleasure to watch it grow rapidly, into a fearless, credible, and prestigious magazine.

But SUNDAY started staggering and dropping one issue after another. I only hope SUNDAY does not follow the footsteps of other ventures to produce a good weekly.
Nasar Chowdhry, Calcutta.

ASSAM'S CHALLENGE

JANUARY 17 in Duli-
ajan was exactly like the
previous 21 days, since
when this town had be-
come a focal point of the
agitation of the Gana Sangram Pari-
shad to oust "foreigners" from Assam.
The choice of Duli-ajan was significant;
this was the administrative head-
quarters of the pipeline division of
Oil India Ltd. The pipeline from Du-
li-ajan carries oil from the wells in
Assam ultimately to the refinery in
Barauni. The movement was using
the power of oil to impress upon the
rest of India the enormity and ur-
gency of the problem that they
wanted solved. The pickets before
the industrial gate of the Oil India
establishment were meant to stop the
flow of oil out of Assam.

Oil India's resident chief execu-
tive in Duli-ajan, Mr Ajit Sharma,

The slogan is :
Jai ai Ashom !

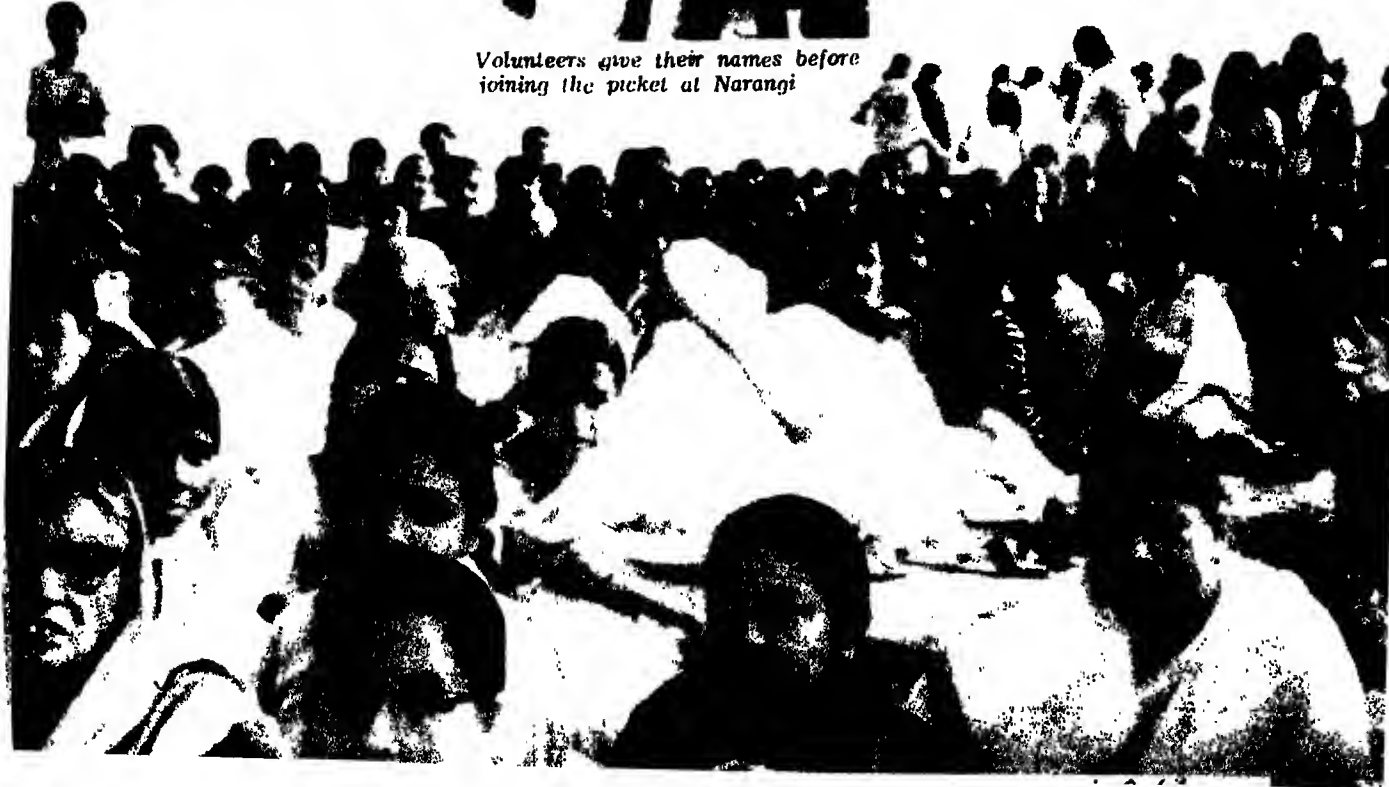
By SUBIR ROY



Volunteers give their names before
joining the picket at Narangi

had his first brush with the authori-
ties when the Government changed
at the Centre and the local adminis-
tration thought the time had now
come to take a tough line with the
picketers. Sharma argued that the
new Government at the Centre
should be given time to evolve its
own policy first; why precipitate trou-
ble with the picketers after they had
been given a free hand for so long
without a new political initiative?
On the 17th he was summoned to
Gauhati to meet the Governor, Mr L.
P. Singh. The person in charge in his
absence was Dr Robi Mitra, manager
(technical). On January 18, to the
picketers and the district administra-
tion, Oil India was represented by
Dr Mitra.

Unlike January 17, the 18th was a
day of tension. The administration
had apparently decided to break the
picket that day and had mobilised ac-
cordingly. The movement people had
come to know, and had also organis-
ed themselves to challenge the po-
lice. At 7.30 a.m. the police declared
the massed picketers an unlawful as-
sembly and asked them to disperse.
They didn't. Instead, more demon-
strators joined in. There was a lathi
charge and tear gas shells were
fired. Then came the sound of two
gunshots from behind the picketers.
The police fired soon after and, ac-
cording to official sources, four have
so far died as a result. The move-
ment people say that many demon-
strators are missing and the death
toll is probably much higher. Soon
after the firing, Dr Mitra was sum-
moned by a telephone call and arriv-
ed at the hospital where the injured



had been taken. A violent crowd awaited him. One version has it that he had instructed the doctors of the company hospital not to treat wounded non-employees. Another version states that all he had said was, release the non-employees after treating them. By the time Dr Mitra arrived at the hospital gate the feeling had spread among the assembled picketers that he was against non-employees being treated. When Dr Mitra reached the hospital gate he was beaten to death.

If Dullajan represents the worst face of the agitation, then ironically the picketing at Naranagi, which is also over oil, is a model of peaceful, spontaneous, properly controlled protest. The Oil India pipeline that carries Assam's crude from Dullajan to the refineries at Gauhati, Bongaigaon and, most importantly, Barauni, has a crucial pumping station at Naranagi, just off the Gauhati refinery. Take over Naranagi and the three refineries will be at your mercy. The picketers have switched off the supply to Bongaigaon (whose output is a mere 0.23 million tonnes per annum) and to Barauni (which produces a massive 5.2 million tonnes per annum). Selected, authorised technicians are allowed to go in and operate the supply line to the Gauhati refinery, and the challans of the tankers leaving are carefully checked to make sure that the destination is the North-East. Buses provided by the local bus-owners, running on fuel provided by the petrol dealers' association, bring young picketers from Gauhati and its suburbs in batches to Naranagi right through the day. Each group leader has a complete list of all the picketers and everyone wears a name badge. As every picketer enters the picket area his or her name is taken down. This is to ensure that no 'miscreants' get in and, in case of a violent incident, every person can be accounted for. These precautions have been taken after the Dullajan raggedy. The picket goes on round the clock. Mainly girls sit there during daytime, and boys sit out the nights.

WHILE the violence in Dullajan has been more widely reported, the carnage that hit the Nalbari subdivision in north Kamrup has been more widespread and left a scar on the land and its people that will take a long time to disappear. Between January 3 and 7 8 people died: one Assamese Hindu, even Bengali Hindus and 29 immigrant Muslims. The arson and the killings seem to have been highly selective and well planned. Most villages in the area have immigrant Muslims or Bengali Hindus living side by side with Assamese Hindus. Depending on which side was on the rampage where, carefully identified clusters of houses of the other community were the target of attack. As a general pattern, the south-west areas of Nalbari adjoining Barpeta saw immigrant Muslims on the ram-

page, and in the northern Mulkamo it was the Bengali Hindus who had the upper hand. Everywhere the Assamese Hindu found either the Bengali Hindu or the immigrant Muslim a good enough target. Language at least had nothing to do with the disturbance. The immigrant Muslims and Bengali Hindus all speak effortless Nalbaria, the local dialect of Assamese. In a tour of the affected area we could not spot any Bengali medium schools. The immigration into the area had taken place long back.

It all began on January 3 when there was a clash between young agitators and the residents of Barikadunga village, 45 km north of Nalbari town. The boys had gone there to collect subscriptions for the movement. The residents of the village were mainly Bengali Hindus and were in no mood to pay for a movement which wanted to evict 'foreigners'. After the clash the boys left the village and returned with reinforcements. Among them was Dilip Huzuri, 16, an Assamese plains tribal. Both sides this time were well prepared. Another clash took place.



Naherbari relief camp

Three boys were injured. In retaliation the agitators burnt 150 houses that night. Also that night, Dilip Huzuri's body was found in a field.

The next day, January 4, there was widespread arson in nearby Madhyambaska village. In the evening curfew was imposed. On the 5th the trouble spread further. There was widespread arson in the neighbouring villages of Paschimbaska, Batahigila and Paschimbanbhag and the suburbs of Nalbari town. That evening Nalbari town and the affected areas were put under curfew and the army was called out for a flag march. On the 6th, despite the curfew, there was more arson in the same areas, and by then the army was asked to actively enforce the curfew. On the 7th at Chawilkhowa, under Mukalmoa police station, 26 km from Nalbari, there were about half a dozen attacks by mobs on immigrant Muslims. The same day the Mukalmoa police station area came under curfew. Again the army was called out. Through all this 38 people had



Martyr's memorial for Talukdar

died, over 2,000 houses were burnt, over 500 were arrested and, till January 21, over 10,000 uprooted people were still in refugee camps.

The Nalbari-Dham Dham road is today a study in arson. Cluster upon cluster of charred remains have replaced what were previously thatched huts. Both Bengali Hindus and immigrant Muslims seem to have been affected. In a nine-village area about 500 houses were burnt. Grief-stricken, almost expressionless people told us the following stories: in Polakata village 18 people were killed; of them six belonged to one family; in a single Muslim village, Kasempur, over 300 houses were burnt, leaving one dead and some missing; in Khudia village two died; in Khatkatra six died ... After a time the tales of woe in Naherbari relief camp that we visited became impossible to bear.

We went to Balitara village, one of the four where punitive fines have been imposed for collective arsoning. There was widespread evidence of arson around it. In fact this is a feature of all the villages facing collective fines. The residents, all indigenous Assamese, complained of severe paramilitary brutality. (They couldn't say if it was the BSF or the army). The place seemed devoid of young

A grim patriarch narrates the violence



Mrs Gandhi's options

THE first, most logical, least painful and in the long run most useful step has already been taken. Giani Zail Singh, Union Home Minister, has ordered one more BSF battalion to be posted along Assam's border with Bangladesh. Moves have been initiated to double the number of BSF outposts. The Government has realised a simple truth: whatever be the magnitude of the present problem, it can always get worse.

The big imponderable in any discussion about the problem of foreigners is where to send them, as the Assamese do not want them in Assam. Bangladesh is unlikely to accept any substantial numbers of people without protracted squabbling, if it does accept them at all. So what happens to the foreigners who have been identified but can't be deported? Mrs Gandhi has given a hint of what she has in mind by stating in the Rajya Sabha that if Assam was unwilling to have people who have been there for many years then they may have to be settled elsewhere; just as East Bengal refugees have been settled in Dandakaranya. A solution along these lines will be widely welcomed in Assam but how accommodating will other states be? And will the Centre be willing to foot the bill? Another stray comment that Mrs Gandhi has made is that those whose names figured in the 1971 and 1977 voters' lists can hardly be called non-Indians. She could be hinting at a new sort of cut-off point.

The most difficult issue to tackle will be that of detecting and identifying a foreigner. A package that is being widely discussed in Gauhati and may constitute an option for Mrs Gandhi is as follows: detection by the police, identification by the local political machinery and deportation on a Government to Government basis. This means that once the police

have prepared a list of suspected foreigners in an area it will be passed on to the local panchayat or its equivalent. The panchayat with the help of a cross section of local politicians from various Parties, will identify the real foreigners. Then it will be for the Union Government to arrange for deportation with the Bangladesh Government. But both detection and identification need a degree of co-operation and sincerity on the part of the administration and the affected people, and these qualities are currently noticeable by their absence.

One line of reasoning says that the Prime Minister will have to make a choice between the Assamese speaking vote and the immigrant Muslim vote. She received a big chunk of the latter which enabled the Congress (I) to win both the seats in Cachar and the Garo Hills one in Meghalaya. If the Assamese speaking people do not see appreciable numbers of people leaving the state the Congress (I) will lose this vote.

A reality central to the whole problem is that there are large tracts of char land where in village after village hardly any administration exists. A policeman seldom goes there. The revenue official pays an annual visit, is feted with chickens and goats and comes back mostly leaving things as they are. The Assamese speaking people are scared that the junior police officials may be tempted to take bribes and ignore the foreigners once the tempo of the present agitation subsides. The illiterate cultivator is scared that there is hardly a scrap of paper with him which can prove that he has been in Assam even if he has lived there for ten years now. It is such dilemmas that can be the despair of any Government.

S. R.

men and girls. We met a model farmer who recalled he had paid a punitive fine last during the British days. Another complaint was that Bengalis had come with the military to identify people for arrest. The Balitara Mahila Samiti has lodged a complaint with the Nalbari police station alleging military atrocities and molestation of women. A 70-year-old man said they had roughed him up and made him stand in the courtyard with his hands tied. In contrast, an old woman said that the Bengali who had accompanied the military had addressed her as *buri ma* and was ever so considerate.

But on January 11 in the adjoining villages of Kumarikata and Kha-

kharisal an event of altogether different import and magnitude allegedly happened. The army was involved in rape, said the local people, who consist of immigrant Muslims (long settled in that area) and Assamese-speaking Hindus. This allegation was also made by the Gana Sangram Parishad. As a result of these accusations the army was asked to stand by and was de-requisitioned in the area on the 12th. We visited the two villages on January 22 and spoke to some of those who claimed to be victims. Aina Khatun, 14, an Assamese-speaking Muslim born of immigrant stock said that it all happened in the early hours of the morning. When the marauders first came, her other relatives

ran to the nearby bushes for shelter. She and her seven-year-old brother got left behind. When they tried to lay hands on her she ran into the courtyard. But they dragged her back into the room. She protested till the last, but she was raped by four people. Her mother said that she didn't send her for medical examination because the father was away and she didn't know whether he would approve. Then we met Zarina Begum, 16, married for one-and-a-half years. Her husband was not with her that day. Her husband's elder brother's widow and her children stay in another hut in the same cluster. Her minor sister was sleeping with her. They took away her minor sister. When Zarina resisted she was soundly slapped. She too was raped by two people. We then met Maya Talukdar, 20, an Assamese Hindu, married for three years with a one-and-a-half-year-old daughter. When they came her husband had already gone out into the field. In the same compound in another hut was her husband's elder brother. They rounded him up and took him out of the compound. After some time one of them came back and tried to persuade her to "give in". When she refused the rapist tried to frighten her by saying her daughter would be killed if she didn't give in. She didn't resist thereafter. Today her husband barely talks to her. She is not allowed to enter the kitchens of other Hindu villagers; she is considered to be contaminated. The village schoolteacher who took us around gave us 16 names of alleged victims. Official sources said seven complaints have been lodged. The teacher explained that for three to four days, arrests of able-bodied men had been going on, so few were there when the marauders came. The raped women were both Hindus and Muslim. The main thing in common was that they were all young and pretty. The carnage against women was not "political" in any sense. It was pure and simple brutality for its own sake.

The officially declared aims of the movement should not have made Dr. Anjan Chakraborty a victim. But he was. A Bengali resident in Assam, he was from Shillong and read medicine at Silchar. Thereafter he came for post-graduate studies to Gauhati as he was academically bright. He shared a room with another Bengali at the hostel of Gauhati Medical College. About two days before December 22 he had told friends in Gauhati that he was feeling a little unsafe and would probably shift out of the hostel. On the fateful night the two roommates heard knocks at their door at midnight. They didn't open the door. A little later the roommate went to the toilet. From there he heard Anjan's shouts for help. He came rushing back and both were severely beaten up. Their cries woke up the other inmates who took them to hospital. Anjan died there. The murder was universally condemned by all, including those

involved with the agitation. Five arrests were made later from the hostel; all five have been released on bail.

Equally unfortunate is another death. As the elections approached and the Gana Sangram Parishad intensified its move to prevent Assam from going to the polls, the focus of attention shifted to Barpeta where Begum Abida, the widow of the late President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed wanted to file her nomination. Tension mounted and there were demonstrations. There was a lathi



Arson in Nalbart

charge on one of these demonstrations on December 10. Khargeswar Talukdar, a pre-university student, was killed. There is some controversy as to whether he died of injuries as a result of the lathi charge or was drowned in the pond where he fell while running. In any case it all began with the lathi charge. Talukdar's flower-bedecked photograph appears now in little martyr's cenotaphs all over the State.

SO who has been fighting whom in Assam and for what? The six-day period in mid-November when people courted arrest in masses marked a watershed in development of the gana andolan. Towards the end of the six-day period the Sangram Parishad appealed to all sections of the people to join the agitation as it was against "foreigners" and no one else. On November 17, every section of the population was out on the streets in Gauhati: there had been a response to the appeal. Since then the movement has tried to live down its distinctly separatist side. The term *bahragata* (outsider) is not being bandied about any longer. The Bihari manual labourer or the Oriya tea garden worker is no longer persona non grata.

But no matter how much the movement may try to live this down, sections who form an important part sound very "regionalist". Mr Nibaran Bora, president of the PLP, has taken delegations of students to Shillong to fraternise with Khasi students in their movement against non-tribal

ascendancy in Meghalaya. He has also travelled to Manipur to seek an entente with regional sentiments there. On the anvil is something like a United States of Ashom which dreams of a formidable plainman-tribal combine in the North-East (except Tripura) arrayed against the rest of India. Solid substance has been lent to these ideas by the discovery of secessionist pamphlets and posters in the Brahmaputra valley and the definite information that a group has journeyed to Tibet through Nagaland for military training. There are allegations that the Americans and Chinese are interested in fomenting such secessionist tendencies.

But does this represent the sentiments of the Assamese youth in general? Is the Gana Sangram Parishad engaged in elaborate window-dressing while most heads are firmly turned the secessionist way? The answer is 'no, not yet'. The most common sentiment a visiting journalist in Assam encounters, goes something like this: 'Please do not misrepresent us and our just cause. We are neither communal nor parochial. We simply do not want foreigners taking over our land. Will another Indian State tolerate as many foreigners as we are having to do? We want to maintain our cultural identity. We do not want to be a minority in our own State as is the

case of the tribals in Tripura'. In a village in north Kamrup district, where we had gone to check the allegation of army 'atrocities', we came upon a group of Veterinary College teachers and students who were there for the same purpose. A young Muslim doctor from Assam argued on exactly these lines.

But along with the foreigner a new enemy is slowly emerging in Assam. New in terms of the present movement, but historically no stranger to the region at all. He is the Bengali Hindu. He has been a prime target in the disturbances of 1980 and 1972-73. That is what makes his current fears real. In the past every spate of violence followed a pattern. It began as an Assamese-Bengali conflict, and later the immigrant Muslim joined in on the Assamese side. This time the battle lines were initially drawn between those speaking Assamese and the others. Since then there have been severe lapses into communal conflict in Cachar and Nalbari, and to an extent in Barpeta. Which ever way you look at it the Bengali Hindu has always been under attack. The antagonism to the Bengali Hindu is by now a well developed philosophy and a way of thinking. The Bengali Hindu has been a great chauvinist himself. He tried to suppress the Assamese language in the past, occupied a large chunk of the

What do the students want?

THINK first demand has been largely granted to them. The elections in Assam, barring Cachar, have been postponed. The most important demand now comes to the fore. A revision of the electoral rolls to delete from them the names of all foreigners. But who is a foreigner in the present context where should a line be drawn accepting migrants from Bangladesh for citizenship? Will it be March 25, 1971, as laid down in the Indo-Munro pact? Or a boundary to the demand is the one for the Centre to articulate a specific foreigner policy and to prepare to foot the bill for it.

Close on the heels of this is the most important demand of the students: deport all foreigners identified as such, or their respective countries, Bangladesh or Nepal. A slogan on an oil tanker was: 'The oil is for the people of Assam, not for the foreigners'. Or even if you don't deport them at least take them out of Assam, say the students, and their sentiments are to follow.

While the question of foreigners has occupied the centre of the stage, the present movement has been built on the more long-standing base of a deep sense of economic neglect that Assam has suffered from. Symbols of this

was the agitation in 1970 for a second oil refinery in Assam. Why should the oil spouting out of the wells in Assam be processed outside the State and it not get the technological and employment benefits accruing out of the natural resources? The students want more centrally financed projects in Assam. They want better exploitation of the State's main natural resources of oil, tea and forests and the development of their products and processing in the State so that the primary employment is generated within the State. Also, the oil refineries are mostly owned by foreigners. The profits from these refineries should not go to foreign countries.

Another demand is that every village in Assam should have a primary school and a health centre. The students want to see the State government take steps to improve the standard of living of the people. They want to see the State government take steps to improve the standard of living of the people. They want to see the State government take steps to improve the standard of living of the people.

S. A.

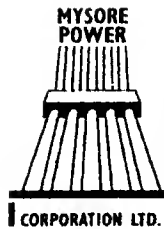
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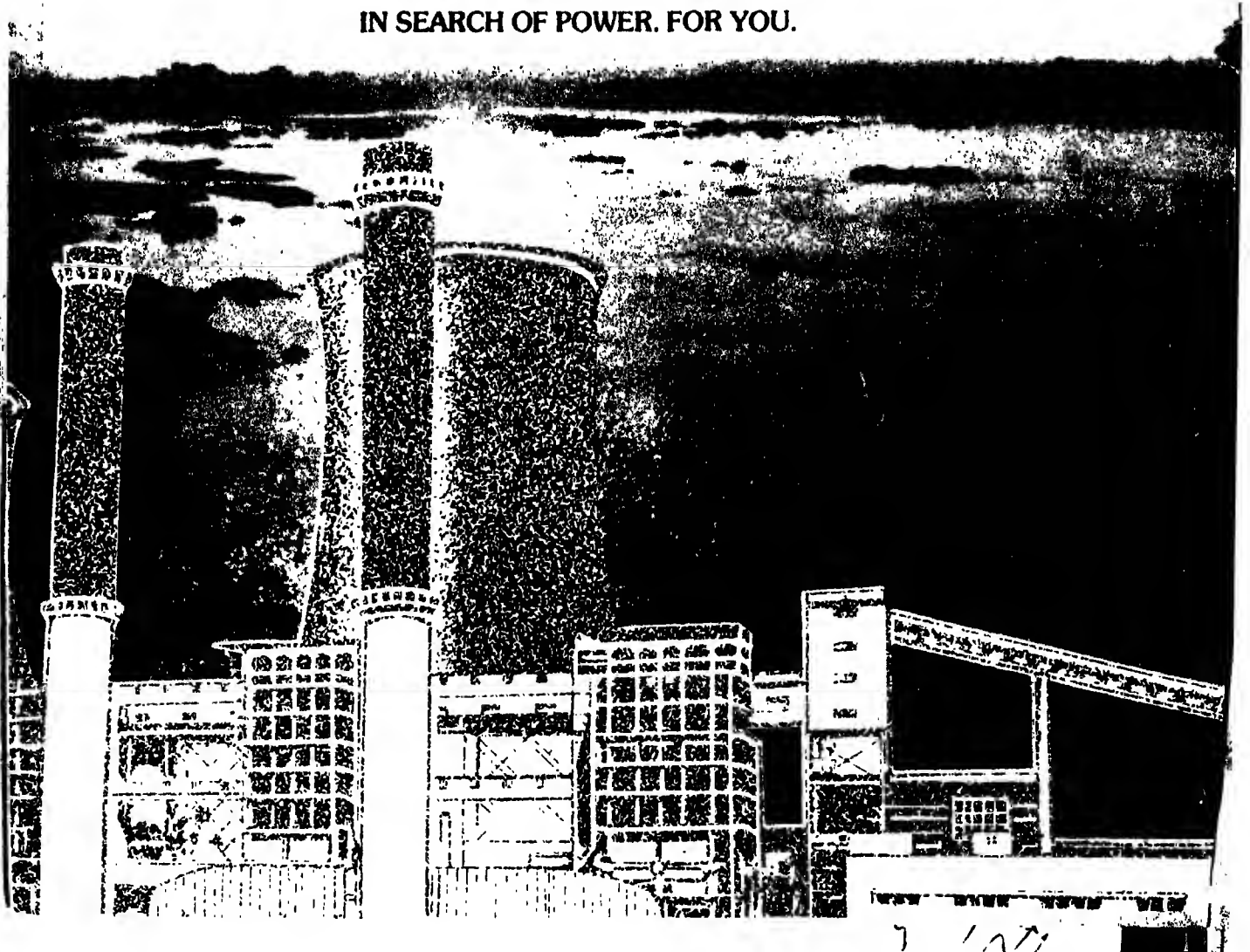
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Will Shillong become genteel again ?

ONE of the most unfortunate fallouts of the agitation in Assam was a similar agitation in Meghalaya. This was surprising, as the tribals in Meghalaya are not economically or numerically threatened. In fact, I have come across a reliable break-up of the electoral rolls for the two parliamentary seats of the State, Shillong and Garo Hills, between tribals and non-tribals and the rise in the non-tribal segment in '79 over '77 is quite negligible. Visually, the most obvious signs of tribal advance in Shillong are their buying into some upper class neighbourhoods where they were previously not to be found.

The troubles began with an attack on some of the adjuncts to an image of the goddess Kali in October (SUNDAY, November 11). The Bengalis beat up two tribal boys who themselves claimed to be innocent. Peace between the Khasi and Bengali communities was brought about by the good offices of two local politicians, Peter Marbanian and Bhaskar Chaudhury. Contact was meanwhile established between the Gana Sangram Parishad people in Assam and a similar combine of regional politicians and students in Meghalaya. The demand rose for a boycott of the elections. Eventually, this succeeded in the case of Shillong constituency. Dramatic violence shook the whole region in December when a Bengali Congress (I) MLA, Manik Das, was trailed from Shillong on the Gauhati-Shillong Road and eventually shot down in an ambush at Boko in Assam. A lady occupant of the car who was a former MLA and the driver were also killed.

Then the murders of Anjan Chakraborty in Gauhati and another boy in Shillong made the Bengalis there lose all their calm. They took out a procession quite unexpectedly and against everybody's better judgment. When the procession reached the Secretariat from Laban, it met an opposing procession and there ensued a half-hour free for all. Stones flew, women were injured. Then came the horrific murder of five Bengalis who were dragged out of a bus on the Dowki road outside Shillong. The magnificent hill station came under severe bouts of curfew. The tourist season lay shattered. It all happened just before Christmas. Till the time of writing church leaders have not condemned the killings. The rudest shock I received on arriving in Shillong was to walk up entirely unawares to the Earle Holiday Home, where I had stayed many times before.



Capt Sangma

There was a new ugly wooden stockade around a portion of with swarms of CRP in the adjoining block. Genteel and elegant Shillong had been defiled; the holiday home had been made into a jail for detainees under a new preventive detention ordinance promulgated in the teeth of the violence. Nine were held under it, three of them politicians.

Mercifully, Meghalaya's ordeals seem to be temporarily over. The Khasi Students' Union has called off its non-cooperation movement. The chance of peace in the area in the coming months will depend on what role Meghalaya's respected and popular politician, former Chief Minister Capt Williamson Sangma, can play. Formerly of the APHLC and now of the Congress (I), he has the confidence of Mrs Gandhi and is firmly set on keeping intact the tribals' link with the national Parties. Observers see the Captain's hand in the reply Mrs Gandhi sent to S. D. Kongvair, Deputy Chief Minister and leader of the HSPDP, who had written to her congratulating her on her victory in the elections. Said Mrs Gandhi: "I am deeply worried at some of the trends in Meghalaya. I want to protect the rights of the Khasis and the Garos." But she would caution the people of Meghalaya against being misled by wrong influences that "create problems for the rest of the country, even threaten the integrity of the rest of the country". The Captain at least has been trying to keep the promise he made on the birth of Meghalaya, that in the new State the non-tribal would be protected.

Why then did Meghalaya come so precariously close to the brink? The first five-man APHLC Ministry that came to power was one of the finest in the country in its integrity and dedication. The divisive decline of the State's politics, rise in corruption and turning towards regionalism have all been a part of the same metamorphosis. There have been

three Ministries in Meghalaya since 1978. Dubious history was made when after the 1978 elections the APHLC, HSPDP and PDIC got together in the Assembly House to elect a new leader but failed because of differences between the HSPDP and B. B. Lyngdoh, then a key leader of the undivided APHLC and the current Chief Minister. The students gheraoed the leaders and wouldn't let them out until a new leader was chosen. They finally drew lots under the watchful eye of Father Snyghi and Darwin Pugh became the Chief Minister. The main regional grouping now in the process of formalisation is the Hills National Union which will comprise APHLC (Ripple Kyndia group) and the PDIC. The thing to watch is whether Captain Sangma and nationalist elements or HNU and regional elements gain ascendancy.

Prominent among the regional leaders is Martin Narayan Majaw, the president of PDIC. Majaw's father was a converted Namboodiri brahmin, his mother a devout Khasi. His relatives have widely married all over India and he himself was in the Swatantra Party for a time. Not the background from which militant regionalism rises. But today, rightly or wrongly, Majaw is credited by most non-tribals with stoking tribal passions that eventually resulted in the killings. I had a glimpse into Majaw's mind in the comfortable glow of a good fire in Pinewood Hotel, where the manager dropped in to say hello and bemoaned the missing tourists. Majaw feels that the tribal is at a disadvantage against the immigrant Muslim cultivator because of three reasons: he is less hard-working, less clever and more individualistic. Majaw agrees that the non-tribal does not pose an economic challenge to the tribal; numerically he is a challenge only in the Garo Hills constituency. But quite illogically, elections were not held in the Shillong seat. What does worry the tribals is a rise in Bengali political self-assertion which they claim to perceive. The PDIC leader begins on an elaborate theory of pan-Islamic designs in the North-East with stories of how money from West Asia and arms from Bangladesh are entering Meghalaya, but admits that the recent violence didn't advance that cause. It came too quickly, he said. His most novel suggestion is for the non-tribal politicians to step down. "We will look after the non-tribals' interest", he assures.

S. R

white collar jobs and secured a considerable elitist position for himself in Assamese society. The price for half a century of domination has been paid for over two decades now by a generation which ruefully regrets its father's sins. By contrast the immigrant Muslim has been out of sight, toiling away in the char and virgin forest areas. Everybody in Assam I talked to admitted that the immigrant Muslim cultivator is hard working. Today substantial numbers of them in Assam have economically organised themselves enough to want to come into their own. They no longer want to declare themselves as Assamese-speaking in the next census. Therein lies the root of the conflict between the Assamese-speaking people and the immigrant Muslim.

Assam today is under a self-imposed siege and has an embattled look. A new slogan has caught the popular imagination, Jai ai Ashom! (Victory to Mother Assam!), and it proclaims itself from most vehicles and countless walls. When young people gather to picket an office or hold a demonstration they often sing and play old resurrected patriotic songs that used to sustain the freedom movement. Volunteers of the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad collect donations at rail and bus stations, from office workers and shops to finance the movement. Government employees have had five days'

PAY UP
 The tensions in Assam were not enough, the more cause for them has been added—subscriptions for the "people's movement" against "foreigners". Students everywhere are collecting money and are holding any non-Assamese who is much as raises a question at all. "They come, twice... They come, twice... when you want to come to your land and cry a bit." The slogan that was being used to the streets came to a halt in the evening. The students were before a cluster of young men who were a bit day for the movement. Even as a young man was being held, the bus every-where was being held. He was all alone and very much, very much, very much. The bus started, the bus started, the bus started. This must be one of the most successful day days.

wages for December cut; there have been as many bundhs. The movement has intensified among the Assamese-speaking people and everybody, almost everybody is being asked to stand up and be counted. Oil,

Assam's most vital contribution to the rest of the country, does not flow out of Assam any more. An agitation that was largely peaceful in the beginning has on occasions got out of hand with disastrous consequences. But there is one hope. If the country gave itself the problem in its present dimensions because of the absence of an effective Central Government since last August, then there is a strong and stable Government at the Centre now. And mercifully, it is aware of the problem. Mrs Gandhi has invited the leaders of the All Assam Students' Union to come to Delhi for discussions and the invitation has been accepted. Apparent was a shrewd move to go over the heads of the leaders of the Purbanchaliya Lok Parishad (PLP) and Assam Jatiyatabadi Dal to the students who give sustenance to the movement and who really matter. The silent hope in Gauhati is that something will come out of the student leaders' meeting with the Prime Minister; a beginning will be made in solving a genuine problem—that of foreign nationals—without creating many more for the state's non-Assamese-speaking Indian citizens; a problem which the state has created for itself and which will have to be physically solved largely by its own administration, but whose economic consequences the Centre will have to bear.

Photographs by Subir Roy



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Mao lives, in Manipur

By SANTANU GHOSH

IMPHAL, Manipur's picturesque capital town, is now slowly losing its quiet look. Sounds of frequent gunfire break the peace, para-military jawans patrol the roads and the population — both local Meiteis and non-locals — stay mostly indoors after dusk. Manipur has been on the boil since the middle of 1978 when the Meitei insurgency was resurrected with the return to the valley of a small band of Lasha-trained youths led by a 35-year-old angry former Government employee, Bisweswar Singh alias N. Bishe. Bisweswar, eluding a close security and intelligence dragnet, heads a pro-Mao rebel outfit: People's Liberation Army, Eastern Wing. There are three more guerilla bodies with similar secessionist aims: People's Revolutionary Party of Kanglaipak (Prepak), Revolutionary People's Front and Red Army. Of the last three, Prepak, led by a Beijing-returned adventurer, R. K. Tulachandra Singh, is somewhat well-knit. Together, these banned urban guerilla bodies conducted about 100 swift hit-and-run terrorist attacks on unwary Government officials, including the members of security forces, since June 29, 1978. About 30 people, mostly belonging to the security forces, were killed during this period by the guerillas.

The guerillas, however, gave the ethnic violence a completely new dimension last month when they attacked two well-known politicians, thus deviating from their chosen path to annihilate only the security forces or Government officials. The first attack was on the former speaker of Manipur Assembly, R. K. Ranabin Singh. It occurred at 7-30 a.m. on December 12 when two unknown assailants fired on him from a close range in his own house and then escaped in bicycles. When the assailants were escaping after the pistol shoot-out, the gunmen attached to the speaker fired three rounds which did not hit any of them. Mr Singh, who was a candidate from the Keishamthang Assembly constituency, is now recovering from his wounds at a New Delhi hospital.

The CPI's Manipur unit secretary and the Party candidate from the same Keishamthong sea, Thokchom Bira Singh, was the second victim, and his wounds proved fatal. Two youths came on a motorcycle to Mr Singh's Sekte village residence on the fringe of Imphal at 6-30 a.m. on New Year's Day and called him out for a chat on the election campaign. After ten minutes of desultory talk, the youths got on the motorcycle but could not kick it into life. They asked Singh to push it a little distance. As Singh put his hands on the cycle to push it, the assailants riding pillion fished out a revolver from under his Naga shawl and riddled the CPI candidate with bul-

lets. The request for a push to the motorcycle was apparently a ruse as the engine instantly spurred to life after the shoot-out and the youths escaped. But they soon met with an accident in attempting to swerve the bike out of a bend. They then waylaid a bicycle-riding Kamui Naga and decamped on his bicycle. The abandoned motorcycle was retrieved and it was discovered that the assailants "stole" it from a relative of an under-secretary of the Manipur Government. He was taken into custody.

While the man-hunt for the attackers on the poll candidates still continues without success, a section of the high-placed security officials at Imphal tend to place the responsibility for the crimes at the doorsteps of Prepak. A senior IPS officer refers to a printed leaflet issued on December 8, 1979 by Prepak which stated that "some selfish and corrupt" persons had filed nominations for election to the Assembly and threatened them with dire consequences. A Prepak spokesman, however, hotly denied having issued such a statement and told pressmen at Imphal that Prepak had asked its seven divisions to find out who had issued the leaflets in its names.

Some CPI members at Imphal tend to connect the killing of Bira Singh to an anti-CPI article that appeared in *Dawn*, a publication of the PLA. In that article, an unnamed PLA spokesman denounced the CPI, describing it as the "chief agent of Delhi bandits". An off-the-cuff remark by Manipur Chief Secretary Suresh Mathur after the killing of Singh have raised many eye-brows. Mathur told newsmen that he had personal information that an attempt would be made on the life of Bira Singh but the intelligence wings failed to dig out such information.

Unlike the Naga and Mizo insurgencies, the one in Manipur has a distinct Maoist mooring and this phenomenon is causing concern in New Delhi. The rebels attached to the four guerilla outfits are not rag-tag desperados but potentially bright college and university drop-outs who are hero-worshipped at Imphal as they are stated to be fighting the alleged exploitation of Meiteis by the Mayangs, meaning mostly the bureaucrats and traders coming from UP and Punjab. According to Home Ministry sources, China has already loosened its purse-strings and provided an arsenal to the PLA. Bisweswar was trained in guerilla combat at Lasha along with 20 other Meiteis between April 1976 and February 1978. This flamboyant youth whose first vocation was pisciculture, was the number two in the now-defunct secessionist body called the Revolutionary Government of Manipur and went underground to float his own organisation after the RGM was disbanded, following a grant of amnesty to it in 1972.

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Brother Muhammad loves India

By A CORRESPONDENT

"EVENTS have overtaken all of us", Muhammad Ali said on January 31, when he announced that he was cutting short his tour of India at President Carter's behest to visit African countries to explain the USA's decision to boycott the Olympic games at Moscow. This sudden cancellation proved to be a big disappointment for his numerous fans in Bangalore, Hyderabad and Calcutta and denied them a unique opportunity to watch the famous shuffle, the celebrated feints and the lightning punches where The Greatest was to have exhibition bouts with his sparring partner and ex-world heavyweight champion Jimmy Ellis. But Ali delighted the crowds at Delhi, Bombay and Madras — the cities he

could visit before leaving for the USA on January 31.

This trip by the "most recognisable human being in the world" and the greatest heavyweight boxing champion of all times was organised by the industrial house of Apeejay. From London, Swaraj Paul, businessman Omer Ahmed and writer Reg Massey made the arrangements and in India the tour was conducted under the guidance of Calcutta industrialist Surendra Paul. Ali's entourage included his latest wife, parents brother and, of course, Jimmy Ellis.

After hanging up his gloves finally ending a spectacular career in boxing in which he showed his guts both inside and outside the ring, Muhammad Ali or Brother Muhammad, decided that he belonged to the world. He said that he liked to be "a part of the struggles of the people, to be concerned with the progress

of the people, and to stand for principles of peace, justice and equality; to show that in a profession which is mainly known for brutality and blood, a man can have nobility and dignity". In India, Ali achieved in part his goal to promote peace, goodwill to men and tourism. Ali's tour was meant not only to extend the frontiers of his personal fame but to help India by improving its image in the dollar-heavy, tourism-oriented Western consciousness. The profits from the exhibition bouts with Ellis held in Delhi, Bombay and Madras will go to charities.

Apeejay, using the expertise of the well-known poet Pritish Nandy and the young and enterprising advertising executive Tapan Chaki, who was the creative consultant, had launched a massive nationwide publicity drive to make the Ali tour a success.



PRAYER


Muhammad Ali



C.N.S.

AJOY BOSE and TOOSHAR PANDIT saw a strange, introspective Ali late one night at the Maurya Hotel, New Delhi when they went for an interview. The whole day he had been paraded around the capital and the publicity campaign had reached a peak in the evening when the promoters had hosted a dinner for the Delhi elite, at which Ali was the chief guest. For more than two hours he had posed with innumerable fans for photographs and signed more than a thousand autographs.

When the clock struck midnight, Ali looked tired and thoughtful. His wife Veronica slept by herself in the bedroom. Even though his eyes were filled with sleep, he was still restless. For a while he fiddled around with the television set but gave up in disgust when he discovered that there was only one channel. After a few questions, it was clear that Ali's heart was not really in the interview. Suddenly he said "Switch off the tape. I will give you something far more special. I will give you an article written by me on prayer. This is my latest. It took me six full weeks to write this. This piece is the essence of what I want to say to the world".

 ASSALAM Alei Kum to all: this is Muhammad Ali speaking on the topic of God and the importance of prayer. This is directed at people of all religions, all races, all creeds, the Hindu, the Buddhist, Judaism, Shintoism, Islam, Catholic, Protestant, Methodist, Baptist, whatever your belief is, as long as you believe in the Supreme Being. The only way we can stay in contact with Him is through prayer. So, prayer is a great part of our lives.

The first aspect of prayer is giving thanks to God for the countless blessings He bestows on us every day and every night. When we go to bed at night and until we wake up the next morning, we're unconscious of everything. With God's blessings, we condition our body for another day, clean our bodies of the impurities which come out the next morning when we use the bathroom.

We're continually being blessed by God—every breath, every inhale and every exhale, are two blessings. The first aspect of prayer is thanking God for His countless blessings which are bestowed upon us every day and every night.

The second aspect of prayer is laying down our shortcomings before the unlimited perfection of God—asking Him to forgive us, forgive us our evil thoughts, forgive us our wrong deeds towards others, asking Him for forgiveness in the things we know are not right.

Why do we pray in such a way? This makes us conscious of our smallness, makes us conscious of



C.N.S. our limitations, shows us how we depend on the Supreme Power. And, therefore, this makes us humble before God. And by humbling ourselves before God, man does not lose any pride, for God alone has the right to demand complete humility from us—although to some people, to proud people, humility is pain. The joy of humility is never known by the proud. By man humbling himself before God, by man telling God all of the things he will not tell others, by man telling God all the things that he will withhold from others, he then opens the door of the shrine of God, which is the heart of man.

He who asks forgiveness, he who looks for forgiveness from his friend, feels a joy that the friend will not know. So we should remember that it is not pride that brings joy, but it is humility which gives us special joy. It is humility, it is humbleness, it is asking for forgiveness when we do wrong, that gives a special feeling, a special joy.

I once heard a story of a great king of India who was mourning over the death of his mother and for a long time, his grief was so great that he could not recover. His ministers, his friends, tried to console him by telling him that he still had much to be thankful for, that he was still their king. They told him that he still had his influence over the country of India, he still had his power. And the King said: 'I heard everything you're saying, but there's only one thing that grieves me. I have everyone to bow down before

me, I have everyone to give way to me, I have everyone to salute me, to obey me. But me as the king, there was one person, when I came into this palace, there was one person me the king had to be humble to—my mother. My mother was the one person to whom I could humble myself. And I cannot tell you what a joy that was to me'.

Another aspect of prayer is to tell God all of our difficulties and our troubles, to ask him for what we need and what we want. Who else deserves such trust but God? The many things we need, we don't want to tell people, the many things we want, we don't want to tell others. Who else deserves such trust but God?

You may have relatives, you may have friends in life and they may try to help you. But they're only human beings like yourself, travelling on the same boat and in the same sea. They're subject to all the same difficulties and limitations that you are. Man can only help man to a certain extent. The more we study human nature, we will see that man always wants to take his troubles to God. Man always, when he has difficulties, runs to God. When he has sorrows, he runs to God. When he's in an accident, or something bad has

happened to him; if he sees death, he again runs to God. And this is why many people pray only in troubled times. This is why many people pray only when they need something. This is why many people pray only when someone they love is sick or going to die.

The fourth aspect of prayer is like the call of a lover to the beloved. Just as it is difficult for us human beings to love someone that we do not know, so it is more difficult for men to love God whom they have never seen. Loving one's fellow man, loving our mothers, our friends, yes. But not everyone is capable of loving the formless, of loving the unseen. You must understand that in the love of God, there is no disappointment. You can love a woman, she can disappoint you. You can find total love in your children, they can grow up and change and disappoint you. You can have a friend, a man or a woman, a male or female, that you put all your trust in, and they can disappoint you. But in the love of God, there is no disappointment. And only the love of God can fulfil the desires of the human heart. All other kinds of love are the steps which lead to the love of God. But who can explain the love of God to one who doesn't trust? God's love

is a perfect love. His love is a great love, his love is a unique, a different kind of love. There's the love of our parents, our mothers and fathers. There's the love of our friends, there's the love of our children. But in the love of God, all this is combined. It is a perfect love.

The fifth aspect of prayer is to know God, and in this way we become near to God. This is the real meaning of the expression, "at one with God" which means complete unity. This cannot be learned; it is a natural tendency. It is the attraction of the soul towards God. This happens because man develops his nearness to God. This isn't taught, all of this is a method in the form of prayer.

Every religion, at whatever time, in whatever country, has given prayer as a method. Hindus, Buddhists, Catholics, Muslims: every religion uses prayer in its method. Man has always shown his childish nature by persecuting others because they didn't pray the way he did. Man has shown his childish nature by always hating other people because they don't have the same religion. Man has taken the outer form of prayer, man has taken the outer form of religion and he has used it to satisfy his own vanity, and the results have been that many people have given up prayer. For instance, Protestantism is a sort of protest against the Catholic form of prayer.

The problem with the whole world today is people don't try to believe in God. The problem with the whole world is people truly don't believe in religion. Man's soul needs religion, but man fights against it. We find that most wars in history have been caused by disputes over religion. In the Middle East, a person dares not say that he doesn't believe in God. But in many countries in the West, people are proud to say they don't believe in God. Why is this wrong? It is wrong because there cannot be any means of rising to a power-consciousness. Some people say if God is in man, all our troubles, our difficulties, our feelings, our attitudes, our thoughts are known by Him. He knows all this. If God knows our troubles, if God knows what we need, if God knows what we want, if God knows our feelings, our future, our past, why should we pray? Why? He knows.

That would be like saying that just because I love a person, why should I show it? Expression is a beautiful part of life. When we meet in prayer in thousands and hundreds, the more people that pray together, the greater the effect of prayer. I've heard people say, what effect does prayer have on the soul? Because man's soul is pure, man's soul is clean. The soul of man sees the external self bow before God and rejoices. Prayer gives nobility to whoever prays. Prayer gives nobility to the rich and the poor. The attitude of a prayerful person towards God is that of a lover to his beloved. The prayer of a proper person towards

Ali in action



Muhammad Ali today does not want to be recognised so much as a boxing celebrity, but as a religious figure. "Don't call me The Greatest. I am no longer The Greatest. All my life I have had to shout 'I am The Greatest'. I had to write poems, but now I am preparing for my ministership. Now I write and talk only on religious matters. You know I could have done a lot of things with all that money I earned. I could have chased women but I have chosen to work for God. I have something special to say. When people hear me they tell me 'Muhammad, it's beautiful. We've never heard this sort of thing before'. I know I have a special role to play."

God is that of a child towards his parents, is that of a servant towards his master, is that of a pupil towards his teacher, is that of a soldier towards his commander. This is the attitude of a prayerful person towards God.

I've heard people say, why did God create beings in order that they should sing his praise? My answer to them is, God does not need to receive our praise; the praise of God is the prescription for man. When you get sick or have some ailment, the doctor does not need you, you don't help him out, but the prescription is something you really need. God does not need us, God needs nobody. But we need Him, and prayer is our prescription to curing us of our ailments. By praising God, man completes the action by which lies the fulfilment of the purpose of the soul in coming to earth.

What makes some people unable to pray is the reflection of their material wants and desires. When the sky is thickly clouded, when the light of the sun has trouble reaching the earth, it is the same as the soul of man, which is divine and full of light: but sometimes it may become clouded worrying about money, worrying about sex, worrying about profits... this clouds our soul, making us unable to pray. If we live right, if we eat right, if we do charity, if we love people, we can face God. If we don't we can't face Him. This is why Muslims pray five times a day, because God continuously stays on their mind.

If I pray in the morning, if I pray at noon, and on the way back from the mosque I see a pretty girl or something happens, then I'm fearful of doing something bad, of thinking wrong because the next hour I have to pray. The next day I have to pray again. This keeps us conscious of evil. This keeps us from doing any wrong. This is why the Muslims pray so much.

The difference between a diamond and an ordinary stone is one of denseness. We're talking about how the cloud of materialism can stop us from praying, make our soul dingy. The diamond reflects light that falls on it, but the stone is so dense that it will not allow the light of the sun to reflect in it.

There are three kinds of people who pray—one person prays because he feels that it is a duty he must do and offers a prayer and he feels ashamed if he does not pray. He is in a congregation and he feels obligat-



Ali with his wife at the Press Conference

ed to pray because others are doing so. He is like a flock of sheep which goes not knowing where or which way is right. Prayer to him is something that he must do because he's in a situation and he can't help it. He prays because it is a custom that is followed by his community. He prays in order to respect those around him. So he goes on doing like everybody else—mumbling something he doesn't really mean. His prayer is mechanical. And if it has any effect, it is very little.

The second kind of person who offers prayer, prays because he has been taught to do so, prays because he's in the habit ever since he was a little child. Mother, father, made him pray, aunty prayed, all his friends prayed. He prays because he was taught to do so. It's only a habit. And these people aren't certain as to whether there's any God or not. They aren't certain as to whether their prayer is being heard or not. A prayer to these people is just mechanical. Their prayer is full of uncertainty. The heart which should

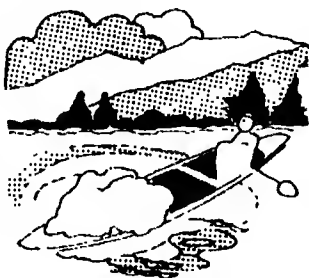
be open to God is closed by his doubt. And if he prayed this way for a thousand years, it would never be heard. It is this kind of person who loses his faith when he meets with uncertainties. He may lose his faith when he meets with disappointments in life. He prays and his prayer is not answered, then he loses his religion.

Then there is the third kind of person who prays, who imagines that he is before God. This kind of person's imagination is strengthened by his faith. He does not only pray to God, he imagines he is praying before God. He imagines he is in the presence of God. Once imagination has helped man to bring the presence of God before him, the God is awakened in his heart. And before he utters a word, his prayer is heard. When he is praying alone, he is not alone. He is there with God. He knows God is not just in the house of heaven, God is close to him, God is before him, God is in him, heaven is on earth and earth is in heaven".

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Ali to Mrs Gandhi : "You are the greatest"

CNS



Mrs Gandhi and Ali

MUHAMMAD ALI boxer spectacular, set yet another record on his first visit to India—he became the first boxer to kiss the Indian Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi. As soon as he met Mrs. Gandhi, Ali jumped up, enveloped her in a bear hug and gave a loud smack on her left cheek. Blushing, an extremely flustered Mrs Gandhi yet managed to keep her cool and smiled back in acknowledgment.

Earlier at 9.50 in the morning on January 25, Muhammad Ali, his wife Veronica and the whole Ali entourage trooped into 12 Willingdon Crescent. To receive them was Sanjay Gandhi wrapped in a shawl and clad in kurta-pajama. Behind him stood Mohammed Yunus, looking extremely excited. Ali and his entourage were escorted into the living room where Rajiv, his wife Sonia and Maneka Gandhi were waiting to welcome them. Within a few minutes a beaming Mrs Gandhi emerged from an adjoining room and as soon as she appeared there was no holding back Ali.

After he kissed her the two settled down and exchanged pleasantries. Some excerpts from their dialogue.

Ali: My wife and myself have been always interested in India. We are also great fans of yours.

We are really happy to have made it.

Mrs Gandhi: I hope you will enjoy your stay in India. It is a country with a lot of charm, a great tradition and even greater people. I am glad that you have come. You are very welcome. What are your plans?

Ali: I have left the boxing ring now. I spend most of my time these days trying to bring peace in the world to promote love and friendship.

Mrs Gandhi (interrupting): This is what we in India are also trying to do.

Ali: Till now, I had a feeling that I was the greatest expert on how to win after losing. But I now find you too are as good. And I say with confidence because I have met the greatest leaders : Carter, Brezhnev, Deng Tsiaoping, you name them. But your comeback has been too spectacular—even more than mine. I have no hesitation in conceding that you are the greatest in your sphere. I only regret that in a way you have punctured my ego.

(Everybody breaks out in loud laughter and a smiling Mrs Gandhi does not reply.)

Ali: I bring you the greetings of the people of the United States and of President Jimmy Carter and

his mother Mrs Lillian Carter. They asked me to convey their greetings when I come here.

Mrs Gandhi: It is very nice of them to say so. I also send them my greetings. Please convey my greetings to them when you go back.

The exchange of plesantries between Mrs Gandhi and Ali as well as his wife continue till suddenly Ali turns serious.

Ali: I think Russia might attack you.

Mrs Gandhi : (Taken aback) I dont think so. But there is no doubt that the situation in Afghanistan is explosive and our efforts have been to see to it that it does not spread any more. We do not want it to escalate any further. And secondly we want peace in Afghanistan and we want peace in the region. Right now we want to devote all our concentration to improve our economy and for that we need peace.

Both Ali and Mrs Gandhi are in a mood to talk but Mrs Gandhi has to hurry to receive the French President Giscard d'Estaing who was arriving that morning. The meeting ended at 10.20 am.

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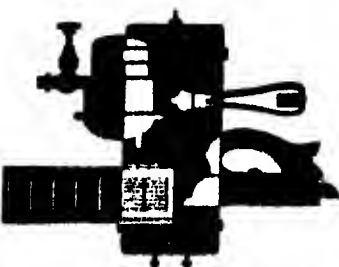
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Two hours of tension

MUHAMMAD ALI does not scare easily, but the two hours during which he was trapped inside the Jama Masjid, surrounded by a screaming, hysterical crowd, must surely be one of the most nightmarish experiences that he has ever had. Ali had gone to the Jama Masjid as a special guest of the Shahi Imam Abdullah Bukhari to participate in the Friday prayers. His entry into the mosque created little commotion since hardly anyone recognised the strapping black giant ascending the Masjid steps by athletic leaps and bounds as the boxing celebrity.

Things went along quietly enough in the beginning. Ali got a special place of honour right behind the Imam to say his prayers which he offered solemnly alone with his manager Herbert Mohammad and other members of his entourage. The trouble started soon after the prayers were over. Word had slowly spread that Muhammad Ali had come to say his prayers in the Masjid and as soon as the Imam announced that Ali would like to address his Muslim brethren after the prayers, the orderly prayer congregation surged towards the champion.

Ali could barely say, "This is Muhammad Ali speaking..." before his voice was drowned in the din and he was surrounded by thousands of curious fans who turned a deaf ear to the pleas of the Imam to stay back and listen quietly. Ali looked worried at this exuberance and seeing that the crowd was threatening to mob him right inside the mosque, he retreated into the adjoining office of the Imam.

The crowd by now had swelled to thousands and more people kept on pouring inside the Masjid determined to make their way to the champion. Further efforts by Ali to address the crowd proved futile. Obviously the crowd wanted to touch Ali and shake hands with him rather than hear his voice.

The Imam meanwhile was making desperate attempts to pacify the crowd and bring about some order. But nobody paid any attention to him even when the hoary old priest waved his stick about threateningly. The Imam had apparently lost control over his flock. Ali, however, was getting furious. He evidently thought that it was the Imam who had incited the crowd in the first place. Not knowing Urdu, Ali put down the Imam's longwinded sermon as the main cause of the disobedience of the crowd. "Do something, Imam," he shouted at the helpless priest.

Meanwhile, a further complication arose. Hundreds of Iranian students marched into the mosque carrying huge banners denouncing President Carter and hailing Ayatollah Khomeini. Raising a chant of "Long live Khomeini" the students advanced on Ali who stood ashen in one cor-



Ali at the Jama Masjid

ner of the Imam's office. One of the students, flaunting a huge blue banner depicting a giant fist smashing down on the USA, was carried on the shoulders of his comrades right into handshaking range of Ali. The champion, on the spur of the moment, decided to win friends and joined in the chanting. Satisfied at this, the students then started chanting "Down with Carter", urging Ali to join them once again in their chorus. By this time Ali had had enough. He ducked inside the office and told the Imam to somehow arrange for him to get out.

This was easier said than done. The crowd showed no signs of moving out for The Greatest. The whole mosque was crammed full with people all trying to get as close to Ali as possible, and they were in no mood to oblige anyone. With the crowd closing in fast, Ali was getting increasingly nervous. The confident smile and loud bluster so characteristic of the champion had vanished. Instead there was a haggard look of fear on Ali's face. At one corner stood his manager Herbert Mohammad screaming, "They are going to smash him. They are going to smash him. And all he wanted to do was talk".

Ali made one last effort to control the crowd. Trying his hand at Urdu, Ali shouted in a heavy American accent, "Chuprahiye, (keep quite) I am Muhammad Ali." But in spite of repeating this one Urdu word over and over again, he had little, or no effect, on the crowd which just refus-

ed to shut up or move. Finally after being trapped for two hours inside the Masjid, Ali made a desperate attempt to fight his way through the crowd. The moment he took a step outside the office, the champion was submerged in the surging mob who clawed and pawed him every inch of the way.

When he was halfway through, Ali suddenly lost his temper at a persistent youth who kept on stepping on his toes and pulling his suit. The famous fists moved like a flash of lightning and the youth was seen flying through the crowd. After this, the crowd treated Ali more warily and the champion ultimately sailed through the gates, hotly pursued by the crowd till he reached police protection outside the Masjid.

The sight of security men at last brought a smile to Ali's face. All this while the police could not interfere with the crowd since they were not allowed to enter the Masjid, but now they formed a barricade around Ali. Having regained his cool, Ali seemed more happy with the crowd, got up on his car, waved his hands at the huge sea of humanity surrounding the whole Masjid area and drove off.

Later, however, relaxing in his hotel room Ali was bitter about his experience at the Jama Masjid. "There are too many people in India. I nearly got killed," The Greatest complained.

Look Left for some answers

In the heady aftermath of the Indira sweep, a Cabinet Minister, A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury, threatened to send the state Government of West Bengal into the Bay of Bengal. On January 21, the people of Kerala showed the Congress(I) that the Left movement could not be treated with such contempt: they voted the Left alliance to power with a stunning two-thirds majority. TARUN GANGULY explains why this happened.

AROUND two p.m. on Tuesday, March 22, you could almost hear the collective sigh of relief from all the people opposed to Mrs Gandhi. The AIR news bulletin at two told the waiting country that the Left Front was winning in Kerala, and in a couple of hours the tickers had confirmed that this was indeed a handsome victory. This was a victory which had come despite the psychological boost given to the Congress (I) by its sweep in the parliamentary polls, and the hectic campaigning done by Mrs Gandhi just prior to the polling day. Mrs Gandhi had drawn huge crowds, and she had visited numerous temples and places of worship to woo the voters towards the side of the Gods as against the side of the Atheists (which the Communists and the Left forces were being painted as during the campaign; there was an effort to make this a God vs Atheist election). Not merely this, when it was realised that there had been very heavy polling in Kerala (over 80 per cent), and that women had come out in large numbers, led to depression among opposition leavers who felt that now Mrs Indira Gandhi had won. A few hours later they were beaming.

The Kerala results could have important repercussions. To begin with, the Left Front Governments in West Bengal and Tripura might get a reprieve. Secondly, this will hasten the formation of some kind of Left Front in Parliament: defeat would have assuredly killed all such hopes. Third the Lok Dal and Janata Governments in UP, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have been emboldened, and the possibility of some kind of electoral adjustment in case of a quick Assembly poll has increased, though of course it is by no means certain.

As far as the Left Parties are concerned, the maximum benefit of the results has gone to the CPI, and particularly its present leadership.

30

The future policy of the CPI was in the balance. The central secretariat had cast its lot with the "Left and democratic forces" as against Mrs Gandhi. The Party chairman, Mr S. A. Dange had bitterly criticised this line, and suggested joining forces with Mrs Gandhi. He was waiting for the kill in case the CPI performance in Kerala was disastrous. But the results have vindicated CPI general secretary C. Rajeswara Rao and Bhupesh Gupta. The doubting Thomases of the central Secretariat can be expected now to totally accept the line laid down by Rao and Gupta. The Dange confusion is expected to evaporate.

As far as the CPI(M) is concerned, the direct fallout from the Kerala victory will be a peaceful co-existence of the warring groups within the Party. The powerful Bengal unit, which had been so critical of the Party's decision to ditch Morarji Desai and join the bandwagon of Charan Singh, will now close ranks with those holding opposing viewpoints. The Kerala elections will soothe the frayed nerves within the Party and give a psychological advantage to the CPI (M) as the nodal point for 'Left consolidation.

The Kerala poll results show that the United Democratic Front, led by the Congress(I), has an edge over the CPI(M)-dominated Left Democratic Front in only two out of the eleven districts in Kerala. In Malappuram district, the UDF captured 10 out of the 12 seats. But under closer scrutiny, it appears to be more of a victory of the Muslim League, which captured nine seats in the district. The CPI(M), the Congress(I) and the Congress (U), each captured one seat in the district.

The other district where the UDF did well was Palghat where it captured six out of 11 seats. The break-up shows that though UDF performance was better, the CPI(M) captured the maximum number of seats

—four, compared to the three captured by the Congress(I). In the same district the Janata Party also got a seat. In fact, if the seat won by the Janata Party is not considered, then both the LDF and the UDF captured five seats each in the district.

In all other districts the LDF has maintained its lead over the UDF.

An analysis of the results shows that the CPI(M) has got seats in all the districts though the performance of both the CPI and the CPI(M) has been somewhat poor in the erstwhile Travancore-Cochin State. The CPI(M)'s position has deteriorated only in one district, Palghat, which was considered the bastion of the CPI(M). On the other hand, the Congress (I), which had so long been claiming to be the main Congress force in Kerala, has performed very poorly. It has been able to capture only 17 of the 55 seats it contested, whereas the Congress (U) captured 21 seats by contesting 30 seats. The CPI(M) captured 35 seats by contesting 50 seats while the CPI got 17 of the 22 seats it contested. Smaller Parties like the Kerala Congress (Mani group and Pillai group) in the LDF as well as the Rebel Muslim League have got eight, one and six seats respectively. In the UDF, the Ezhava Party, the SRP has failed to get any seat. The Left Front, which has got 93 seats, had asked the Governor, Mrs Jothi Venkatachalam, last month to be allowed to form the Government before the last Assembly was dissolved and fresh elections called. At that time, the Front had a strength of 88.

Though considered one of the most literate States in India, the backward pull of caste and religion was present in Kerala. But then, it is to the credit of the Left Front that it has been able to earn the support of the electorate despite religious and casteist propaganda. The Congress (I) election strategy was mainly centred around casteist and religious considerations, although the Left Front was not completely free of it. That the pull of religion is becoming feeble in Kerala has been proved conclusively. The Congress (I)'s eagerness to include the Nair Party of NDP, the Ezhava Party of SRP and the backing of the powerful Catholic Church appears to have been proved to be its undoing. Mrs Gandhi in her forty-eight hour tour of Kerala visited the temples of Guruvayoor in Tricur, Padmanavaswamy in Trivandrum, the Narayanguru Samadhi of the Ezhavas and the top hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Despite her attempt to woo the voters through paying obeisance to their religious beliefs, the Congress (I) lost in 22 out of the 31 constituencies she visited. People came

MANHAR

SHIRTINGS



out in thousands to see Mrs Gandhi. But it now appears, that though they were curious to see her, they had already made up their minds about whom to vote for.

The Kerala elections have again proved that the Congress (I) victory in the Lok Sabha polls in the north Indian States notwithstanding, the electorate is not hesitant to go for an alternative wherever it is viable. In Kerala, the Left Front has got 52 per cent of the votes and almost two-thirds of the seats. If in West Bengal and Tripura, the CPI(M) overshadows its partners, Left and democratic unity is a reality in Kerala. Of the 140 seats in the Assembly in Kerala, the CPI(M), though the largest Party, has got only 35 seats, the CPI has got 17, the RSP has got six.

The Left Parties together have got 58 seats. Among the non-Left Parties in the LDF, the Congress (U) has won 21 seats, Kerala Congress (Mani group) has won eight seats, the Pillai group has won one, and the Rebel Muslim League has won five

seats. In other words, the democratic elements within the LDF have won 35 seats. So the Left Parties and the democratic elements within the Left block have to maintain close relations if the Left Front Government in Kerala is to survive.

There is no doubt that the weak links in the Left Front Government in Kerala are the Congress (U), the Kerala Congress (Mani group) and the Rebel Muslim League. The Congress (U) has very little chance of surviving as a national Party as, in the foreseeable future, a large chunk of the Party in North India might join the Congress (I). In such a case, the Congress (U) in Kerala will also come under stress and strain. It is to be seen how Mr Antony will hold together the Party in such a situation. One redeeming feature of the Congress (U) component in Kerala Assembly is that most of the members are very young and have a positive approach. In times of strain, there is a strong possibility that a sizable section of the Congress (U) might remain with the Left Front as

a regional Party. The same situation might be repeated in the case of the Kerala Congress (Mani group) and the Rebel Muslim League.

With the Kerala Assembly elections results having been announced, the Left now has control over three states in the country. It is to be seen whether it will have any impact on Mrs Gandhi's style of functioning. Immediately, the idea of Left and democratic unity might emerge as the rallying point for a majority of the non-Congress (I) forces. In the Lok Sabha, the formation of a Left Front as the main opposition Party is in the offing. If the Assembly poll victory of the Left Front in Kerala has somewhat sobered the euphoria in the Congress (I) camp, it has also dawned on the Left that now it has much at stake. The Left will now be more eager to see that the ruling Congress (I) Government at the Centre does not catch it on the wrong foot. Live and let live might become the slogan of the Left for some time to come. ■

UP: How the Congress(I) won

By UDAYAN SHARMA

THEY tell the story of a gambler who took a number of high denomination bets prior to the Lok Sabha elections. It was a foregone conclusion, he said, that the Janata would sweep the polls in Uttar Pradesh. There were not exactly several takers but those who put down their money put down lots of it. For weeks before the polling he sat chuckling and planning what to do with the money after it was all over. Life was not so rosy after the results started coming in. Today the gambler is nowhere to be seen and rumour has it that he is masquerading as a sadhu on the banks of the Ganga.

The Janata polled only 22 per cent of the total votes and managed just three out of the 85 seats in this State. As if that was not bad enough, 56 Janata candidates finished a poor third in 111 reserved constituencies and 11 of them lost their deposits as well. As a matter of fact, the Janata did not even figure in the timetable in as many as 51 constituencies, where the main contest turned out to be between the Congress (I) and the Lok Dal.

In the end it became patently clear that the Congress (I) — which ultimately won 51 seats — won 35 of them because the Lok Dal and Janata split each other's votes. In reality, the Congress (I) should have won only 16 seats since it was in only 16 constituencies that Mrs Gandhi's candidates polled more than those of the Lok Dal and Janata put together.

In Meerut city, for instance, Mrs Mohina Kidwai of the Congress (I) polled 1,79,000 votes against 1,21,787 votes polled by Harshpal of the Lok Dal and 1,01,219 votes polled by Kailash Prakash of the Janata Party. In Agra constituency, the victorious Congress (I) candidate polled 1,17,942 votes as against 2,01,692 votes polled by the Janata and the Lok Dal candidates together. Ram Minhore Rakesh of the Congress (I) who won from Chail polled 91,611 votes as against the 77,894 votes polled by B. L. Shailesh of the Lok Dal and 31,040 votes polled by Sarla Chaudhari of the Janata. In Ghazipur, the Lok Dal-supported CPI candidate, Sarjoo Pandey polled 1,20,005 votes as against 1,25,297 votes polled by the Congress (I) candidate, Jainul Bashir. The Janata candidate, Gauri Shanker Rai polled 89,354. In UP, the Congress (I) polled 35.74 per cent of the votes and won about 60 per cent of the seats. The Lok Dal polled 29 per cent of the votes and the Janata Party 22.47 per cent.

Interestingly, the Janata Party and the Lok Dal together polled 55 per cent of the votes in UP but won only 32 seats. (This is excluding the Ferozabad constituency, from where Rajesh Kumar, Independent, won but has now joined the Lok Dal.) It would be unfair to say that the Congress (I) benefited from all triangular contests. In some constituencies, admittedly few, the Lok Dal and the Janata Party benefited from triangular contests. In Ballia for example, from where the Janata Party president, Mr Chandra Shekhar won, the Lok Dal candidate Janeshwar Mishra, was a brahmin. In the absence of the Lok Dal candi-

date, a sizable section of the brahmin and backward votes would have gone to the Congress (I) candidate, Jagannath Chaudhary, and made Chandra Shekhar's victory an impossibility.

Among the Congress (I) candidates from UP, only five secured more than 50 per cent of the total valid votes polled from their respective constituencies. They are Mrs Indira Gandhi (Rae Bareilly), Sanjay Gandhi (Amethi), H. N. Bahuguna (Pauri Garwal), N. D. Tiwari (Naini Tal) and Anand Singh (Gonda). The Janata Party, which won only three seats, put up a good fight in 25 constituencies before losing 17 seats to the Congress (I) and eight to the Lok Dal. The Lok Dal put up a stiff fight in 30 constituencies, losing all of them to the Congress (I) but finishing second.

One important question which arises with regard to the UP polls is: what happened to the harijan votes? The Janata was expected to get a large chunk of the harijan votes but it did not win even one out of the 18 reserved seats. The Lok Dal, which was generally underestimated, won ten of the reserved seats, while the Congress (I) won the remaining eight. The elections also proved wrong all commentators, who had said that the main contest in UP would be between the Congress (I) and the Janata Party. It must have surprised them when the Lok Dal won 30 of the 79 seats it contested from this State.

Among the other seats (non-reserved), the Janata Party selected 25 rajput candidates, 15 brahmin candidates, nine Muslim candidates, seven upper caste candidates and 11



Bhoja Chatter

backward candidates. The Congress (I) selected as its candidates 12 rajputs, 24 brahmins, two from the upper castes, 15 Muslims and 14 backwards. On the other hand the Lok Dal selected 21 upper caste candidates, 15 Muslim candidates and 31 backward candidates.

While the Janata Party failed to make any impact, the Lok Dal repulsed the Congress (I) wave in western UP. The Congress (I) won all the four seats from the hill region and all the four seats from the Bundelkhand region and most of the seats from central UP. Interestingly, central UP was considered the stronghold of the Jana Sanghis, and they were expected to fetch the votes for the Janata Party. The Congress (I) also won the major share of the seats from the eastern districts, though it won only a few of the seats from western UP. The Congress (I) won with great difficulty in Etah, Agra and Meerut. Chaudhary Charan Singh increased his margin of victory from Bagpat while his wife, Gayatri Devi routed both the Congress (I) candidate and the Janata-backed Muslim National Front leader Zulfikarulla from Kairana constituency. In eastern UP, the Lok Dal lost largely because

of Raj Narain, B. P. Maurya and others who ensured the defeat of at least 15 Lok Dal candidates by an unwise selection. However, from Phulpur to Akbarpur, Jaunpur and Azamgarh, the Lok Dal, led ably by Ram Naresh Yadav and Chandrajit Yadav repulsed the Congress (I) onslaught. In this belt the Lok Dal won seven seats. Among the prominent leaders who lost from this region are the Congress (I) candidate Mrs Kamala Banuguna and the Janata candidate Mr Ram Dhan.

As far as the Muslim votes are concerned, the Muslim voters in western UP largely supported the Lok Dal candidates except in Agra city, Meerut city and Etah. And these were precisely the seats the Lok Dal lost in western UP. But in the rest of the State (the exception being the Azamgarh belt) the Muslim voters solidly supported Mrs Ganuni. In Aligarh, the Muslims supported the Lok Dal candidate, Indira Devi, but in the neighbouring constituency of Agra city, they opposed the Lok Dal candidate Baiju Agarwal. The pro-Congress (I) swing among the harijans tilted the scales against the Janata Party and the Party bosses realised that it had been a mistake to seek votes in the

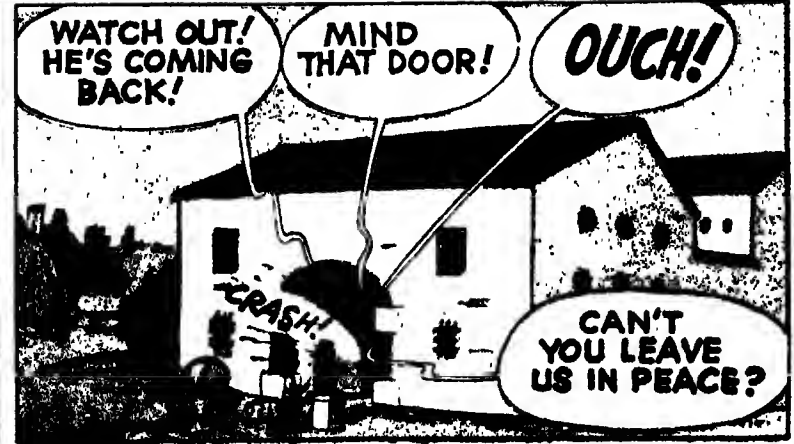
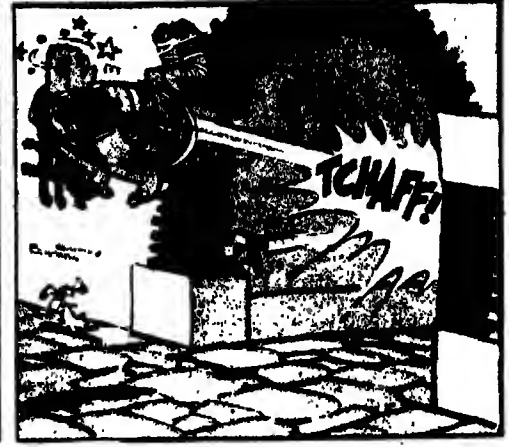
name of Babuji only. They did so in the hope that the harijans, who constitute 31 per cent of the electorate, would cast their votes in favour of the Janata Party. But rumours about Babuji defecting to the Congress (I) failed to make this ploy work. On the other hand, the Congress (I) secured the votes of the harijans, Muslims and brahmins. Eleven Muslims on the Congress (I) ticket and seven Muslims on Lok Dal tickets won the elections from UP. Not a single harijan or Muslim has won on the Janata ticket, in spite of the fact that the Janata Party had given tickets to nine Muslims, most of them belonging to the Muslim National Front.

The Janata Party, further, overestimated the influence of its Jana Sangh constituent. Twenty-six Jana Sanghis were nominated as Janata candidates. In 1962, the Jana Sangh won seven seats from UP and in 1977, out of the Janata's tally of 85, the Jana Sangh's share was only 18. In 1980, only one Jana Sanghi won — Dayaram Shakya from Farrukhabad. The Janata Party's poor performance in UP shows that its over-reliance on the RSS boomeranged and the weaker sections of the society were alienated in the process. This was proved in the 26 constituencies from where the Jana Sanghis contested the elections. By uniting the backward castes, the Lok Dal crushed the Jana Sangh strongholds of Bahraich, Basti, Jaunpur, Saidpur and Lalgaon and won the elections from here.

The Lok Dal's victory in western UP was the personal victory of Chaudhary Charan Singh who cut across the caste lines in this area and also managed to get Muslim votes for his nominees. This could serve as a lesson to Mr Raj Narain and Karpoori Thakur who could not broaden the social base of the Lok Dal in Eastern UP and Bihar. In Eastern UP, Charan Singh, instead of articulating the caste feelings galvanised the peasantry and got handsome support from them.

Just for the knowledge of statisticians, Mr H. N. Bahuguna was the only successful candidate of the 1004 contestants (in UP) to have performed a hat trick in successive Lok Sabha elections. In the last three elections Mr Bahuguna has won from three different constituencies on three different symbols. Congress (I) circles may not agree, but it is a fact that Mr Bahuguna contributed a lot to the Congress (I) victory in UP. He was the man who set the ball rolling for the Congress (I) in Uttar Pradesh. Though he does not command mass support, the Congress (I) could not have won more than 25 seats in UP without him. A fine example is the Fatehpur constituency, where the Lok Dal candidate, Liyaqat Hussain, lost to Mr Hari Krishan Shastri of Congress (I). This analysis excludes, for very good reasons, mention of Parties which over-reached their ambitions such as the Congress (U) which has now become the Congress.





The TV spots muddle

It's bungling at the top

THE earliest signs were evident in 1977, when viewing time on TV first ran short of supply. Barely a year after TV went commercial, all the major advertising agencies chalked it in as a prime advertising medium for consumer products. As All-India viewership escalated to 2,172,000 (watching TV seven days a week according to NRS) advertisers of middle and upper income products began clamouring increasingly for spots in the weekly 33 minutes that Bombay and Delhi stations allotted to commercials. And failure to get time, sparked off allegations of backdoor methods of getting both prime time and a priority in the bookings.

For the last two years it has been an open secret in advertising circles that a few inner-circle groups with contacts in the I and B Ministry in Delhi could get you your spots in *Chhaya-Geet* or *Churahaar* within 15 days, though official bookings for the next one year had ostensibly closed. It was a live-and-let-live situation both for the advertisers and agencies, since the official releases of the spots were made through the agencies, who still got their entire, or very nearly their entire 15 per cent. What, to quote one account executive, 'scared the pants off the agencies' was when the new TV accreditation rules were implemented in October '79, and the system of rationing time per agency was started. "Just as Denmark legalised pornography, it appears as if TV has legalised corruption" he said to me in disgust.

The new accreditation rule allots the 15 per cent commission to only those agencies that brought in over a lakh rupees worth of business, and a 10 per cent commission to those that did not, and for good measure slapped on a cash-down only-advance-payment rule to the unaccredited ones. The crucifying bit, however, was something else again, a bank-statement of Rs. 25,000 to be submitted by the agency before accreditation was assured. "Almost inevitably this made it difficult for any above the board agency to include TV in its list" says Amol Bose of the Amol Bose Advertising, the only adman who did not make his non-quoting a prerequisite for speaking to me. The rest, to a man, feared dire recriminations from the Loknayak Bhavan

for their impudence. "They pass these rules in the name of the small agency and then make it impossible for genuine small agencies like mine to use TV".

When simultaneously it was announced that upon booking in advance, agencies could book a maximum of 30 seconds in each Hindi film song programme and 30 more in the weekly feature film, new agencies began springing up by the score. They printed letterheads, submitted their bank balances, booked all the prime time they could and then began pirating away the blue-chip clients from established agencies who had used up their quota. Days after the announcement of the new scheme, an outdoor hoardings man named Mittal almost succeeded in spiriting away Cadbury-India from Chaitra, and Richardson Hindustan from OBM. S. S. Oberoi, who had handled the "Vicco Vajradanti" film accounts actually succeeded in getting the huge "Snorex" (Sehgal Papers) account out of Ulka by offering to do the film free, as well as guaranteeing as much prime time as they required. In Delhi, where the racket has its major base, Adwel and Vasudeo Publicity, both hoardings firms confirmed personally to me (when they were contacted in the last week of December, under the name of a fictitious advertiser) that they would 'manage' to get me *Churahaar* spots in the third programme of January. This despite the fact that *Churahaar* has been booked till early 1981. Adwel, which has its office in Connaught Place, has started sending letterheads describing itself as 'Specialists in TV, Radio, Hoardings and DFC buses'. However, the busiest agency in the racket is called Renukay, but I was unable to confirm the fact as they could not be contacted at their Tolstoy Marg office. It is also known that one of the well-known programme comperes on the commercial channel of AIR has the influence to get the prime time that advertisers need.

How do these people operate? Says an account supervisor in the Delhi office of a multinational agency, "I don't think that the contacts of these spurious agencies lie in the office of the Controller of Sales. It is more at the I and B level; once you keep them happy, it isn't difficult".

Whereas formerly the intervention of these middle-men had been largely to help agencies get the time they required for a consideration (usually three per cent), their establishment as separate agencies on their own helps them not only to release the advertisement but pocket the entire 15 per cent. Every agency is eligible for a maximum of 78 minutes a year, which at 15 per cent would give the agency an approximate of Rs. 1,05,000, taking a conservative 'A' spot rate. This works more on the level of the agency-advertiser contact, the agency selling time in the "black market" to advertisers, or routing their account through it although the actual material may have been prepared by the original agency, that could not release the spots since it had run out of its quota.

Where the TV centres feature directly in the racket is when they put some time actually for the future, possibly for a last minute advertiser who doesn't mind paying that much more. Mr S. Y. Kamlaapur, the Controller of Sales, perhaps unwittingly disclosed how this happens when he told me that "although we say that we are booked, marginal increases are possible in the allotted time to commercials, specially in the case of deserving advertisers who come at the last minute". And who were these deserving advertisers? "Different people ... film producers for instance, who cannot book their time in advance. Also when new products are launched and TV is vital for the advertiser, we try and accommodate them". In addition to this scrounging of a few seconds off the programme, the fact that when cancellations are made there is no waiting list maintained, also opens up possibilities for the man with 'contacts'. And with a bit of work on the side, one of the large indigenous agencies from Bombay claims that its bookings are never acknowledged, and in some cases acknowledged bookings are not honoured "through oversight". Another agency, despite having billings of over Rs. 63 lakhs and having given business worth over Rs. six lakhs to Doordarshan alone, did not get accreditation until the Advertising Agencies Association of India (AAAI) took up the matter. Such 'oversights' are often to the benefit of the inner circle of agencies, who have now reportedly been the initiators of the recently formed National Council of Advertising Agencies that has tried to undermine the AAAI as the mouthpiece of the advertising world.

"What surprises me is that the few people in the I and B who are making their fortunes on this rule should have had the clout to have a policy decision passed, to enable them to feather their nests" says

the Chief Executive of one of the top ten agencies in India without multinational contracts. "They began by making the TV billings of agencies (in their confidence) to prevent the obvious fact of unknown agencies being betrayed as inordinately large users of TV. This is something that no medium keeps confidential, since it is very easy for the person interested to compute the figures from the spots themselves. And now they have implemented this accreditation rule ostensibly to help the small agency, but at the same time they have a pointless clause of the bank guarantee of Rs 25,000 which no small above the board agency can meet without considerable difficulty. The coast is clear for the racketeers".

It sounds a fine idea on its face; Kamapur says: "It would make my work easier if I just opened bookings on a first-come-first-serve basis

but then I would only serve four or five contracts from the largest agencies. This way, I give a chance to the smaller people to use TV, and let the larger agencies do their own rationing according to their priorities. If we rationed time per advertiser we would not know which one had new products, which one needed more time because of a larger range of products. Hindustan Lever naturally would need more time than a one-product client, and I can leave it to Lintas to divide their allotted time to their clients more effectively than I can here". But the essence of fine ideas such as this are the loopholes that are left for the man who would take them only in word, and entirely turn them for his benefit.

ASHISH RAJADHYAKSHA,
Bombay

Ambika Soni's presidentialism or would you prefer to continue the present arrangement under the AICC?

A: That time also there was no separate identity and to say that there was a separate identity is mischievous. As youth workers we are ultimately committed to the Congress Party and Indian Youth Congress itself is working for strengthening (the) Congress Party. So no one in the IYC can think of a separate identity.

Q: How do you analyse the emergence of Sanjay Gandhi on the national plank?

A: This election has proved that the nation was looking forward to the emergence of Mr Gandhi on the national plank. The IYC especially wants to build up Sanjay's leadership to the maximum height. I and many others belong to Sanjay Gandhi's age group. So we, of the same generation, need a national leader who may get total acceptance of the people throughout the country. Any third world country cannot survive or emerge in the absence of a charismatic and committed leader. Charisma means influence over people, by the largest majority of the struggling people. And he fulfils all these requirements.

Q: Now that you have once again come to power, would your organisation like to fulfil its incomplete programmes such as family planning etc?

A: For us the fulfilment of these programmes is the cherished goal of our political career. These programmes which are standing till now, because the problems for which the programmes were made and thought of, still remain unsolved. So we cannot forget these programmes. Family planning was and is only one of these programmes for the upliftment of the poor sections of the society.

Q: You may not agree, but the fact remains that most of the IYC members come from the affluent class of urban society. Anybody could see this after your Party's recent victory. How can your organisation understand the problems of the poor?

A: As far as the IYC leadership is concerned, most of them come from rural (areas). Since the capital and state capitals are the centre of operations, sometimes it (appears) that the leadership may be from among the elite. But this does not mean that it has an urban bias. Because urbanity has an economic connotation. In that sense you cannot say that it is an urban-affluent-oriented organisation. For example, I come from the village, belonging to a family at the bottom of middle class. And the largest proportion of the leaders at any level is from the rural side with poor economic backgrounds.

Q: But doesn't this proportion of the so-called rural population belong to the upper caste or say ruling class?

A: I don't think so. But it seems that you yourself have some sort of bias.

'The nation was looking forward to the emergence of Sanjay Gandhi'

K. V. Panicker tells UDAYAN SHARMA

Mr K. Vasudeva Panicker, general secretary Indian Youth Congress (Indira) is considered one of the strong men of the organisation. He was interviewed by SUNDAY just after the elections results started coming in.

Q: How would you analyse your Party's massive victory?

A: I was very confident about this landslide victory. There are two points. One is political mathematics the other is the common people who are highly political in their thought and action. When the Janata Party was still powerful and Morarji Desai was also powerful, in most of the by-elections either to Lok Sabha or the Assemblies the Congress (A) either won or reached near victory. When the Janata Party was split into two then naturally the Congress (I) was the largest Party with maximum base. So in such a situation only the largest and the best knit Party could manage to sweep the polls.

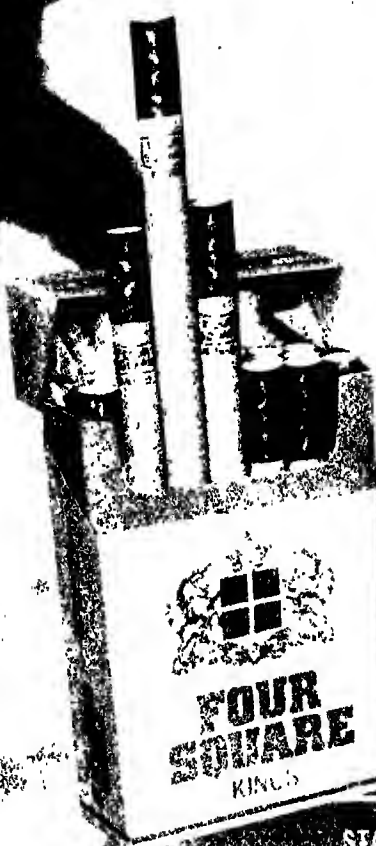
The second aspect—the masses will always stand by the national political organisation with left orientation led by a committed leader. And the Congress (I) was the only organisation which has a fantastic national leader.

Q: In your Party the Indian Youth Congress (IYC) is a very important factor. Would you be able to control Youth Congress stormtroopers? To be frank, the majority of the voters who voted for Mrs Gandhi in this election are still suspicious of your organisation. How would you remove this suspicion?

A: The IYC is not only an important factor but it is also a very massive as well as revolutionary base of the Congress Party. It is not correct to call us stormtroopers, or hardliners but it will be better to say that we are the committed and unsundering cadre of the Party, struggling to implement the socio-economic philosophy of Congress Party. The people who voted for Mrs Gandhi and the Party are not at all afraid of (the) Youth Congress. On the other hand they are happy with (the) Youth Congress for two reasons: One—for the landslide victory and the fantastic contribution of (the) Youth Congress, and two, Mr Sanjay Gandhi, Mr Ramchandra Nath and also other youth leaders (have been) elected with such a big margin (that it) means that the people believe that they will deliver the goods.

Q: Would the IYC again seek a separate identity as it did during Mrs

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LINTAS-PKK. 31-373

Pakistan's cultural invasion

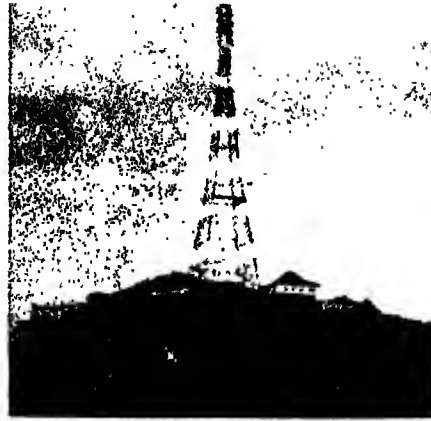
Kashmir TV is losing viewers

AMIDST the picturesque landscape of Srinagar, a new feature is rapidly gaining prominence. A rash of television antennae adorns rooftops all over the Kashmir valley, but the strange thing is that ninety per cent of TV viewers have abandoned Srinagar Doordarshan in favour of Pakistani television centres. All sorts of electronic devices such as boosters are being used in order to get a clear reception from TV centres across the border, with the result that Pakistani TV stars are becoming very popular in the State. Two Pakistani TV personalities who have the largest following are Khush Bakht Shuja, compere of the programme "Meena Bazar", and Tariq Aziz, who presents "Neelam Ghar", a quiz programme.

The Pakistani Television Corporation has taken certain measures to improve reception of its programmes in Kashmir. One such measure is the erection of a relay tower at Muree (Rawalpindi) and the Corporation is also installing a television centre at Tardkhal in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

One reason for the dissatisfaction with Kashmir Doordarshan is that since its inception in 1973, it has failed to broadcast good programmes and has not catered to the tastes of local viewers. Programmes telecast from the Srinagar Kendra, complain viewers, have no relevance to the local tastes and culture. In addition, the transmitting tower of Doordarshan, Srinagar, perched on the Sankaracharya hilltop, is reputed to have a range of 80 kilometres, but has failed even to cater to viewers in the valley. Srinagar Doordarshan also cannot be picked up in the Jammu Division and so viewers in Jammu have to depend on programmes beamed from Lahore and Amritsar stations in Pakistan.

According to one production assistant: "Internal bickerings and official squabbles are the root cause for poor performance. High-ups in the station have their own followers who have been instigating one staffer against another. At times they add a communal tinge to purely administrative matters and they will go to any extent just to further their interests." There are allegations of corruption, mismanagement, skulduggery and exploitation being publicly levelled against the bigwigs in the Kendra. A memorandum was presented to the former Information and Broadcasting Minister, Mr L. K. Advani, levelling serious charges against the director of the Srinagar Kendra. "Only a probe can reveal the truth," said one young producer. "It seems the Ministry has hushed up the matter. Allegations made by the



Transmission tower at Srinagar

Youth Front seem to be true, as no one in the Kendra has denounced them till now." Said someone else: "There is a lot of mismanagement. About eight lakhs were spent on the preparation of sets for various programmes. But, nothing has been preserved. The money has gone down the drain."

No one in the TV centre seems to be in the least perturbed about the reception Pakistani TV has been getting. "Favouritism, corruption and lack of encouragement has bred inefficiency," complains one production assistant. "We have about two

dozen producers and eighty per cent of them have been appointed on political groups. Another assistant, Mir Manzoor, asserted: "We have plenty of talent which needs only encouragement. We have produced some good documentaries."

A leading Kashmir poet and Sahitya Akademi Award winner, who was diffident about being quoted, said that Srinagar Doordarshan had failed to earn an audience because its programmes lacked cultural unification. Mr A. R. Wani, MLC and president of the "Koshur Samaut"—an organisation which has been fighting for the cause of the Kashmiri language—was highly critical of the high-ups in the Kendra, which, he says, has lost its credibility. Very few programmes are being broadcast in the Kashmiri language, which is used by 65 per cent of the State's population. It has also earned a great deal of wrath from the public because of its distortion of news."

A high-ranking official of the Kendra, who regrets the immense popularity of Pakistan Television, complains: "This is all Delhi's doing. The studio building had to be completed with all sorts of red tapeism, Sudio equipment cannot be imported any more. It has to be manufactured by Bharat Electronics. No new studio can start functioning before 1980 or 1981 and until this happens we cannot broadcast programmes like quizzes or other such big programmes. There is red tapeism at all levels: the Kendra has only three electronic cameras, all of which have defects that cannot be repaired. There is an average of five breakdowns every three hours of transmission and the 'rakawat' (trouble) has become a household word.

Z. G. MOHAMMAD. Srinagar

No crisis in Orissa, yet

But Yashpal Kapoor's visit has created uncertainty

THERE were two khadi-clad passengers who disembarked from the morning flight from Calcutta to Bhubaneswar on January 23. One of them strode briskly from the aircraft to the terminal building; he walked like a man who had something important to do. He was Yashpal Kapoor, right-hand man of Mrs Gandhi, whose mission was primarily to effect a merger between the Lok Dal and the Congress (I) in Orissa. The other man was Biju Patnaik, Lok Dal leader and one time Minister for Steel and Mines in the Desai Cabinet.

Since there was no one at the airport to receive him, Kapoor went straight from the airport to Patnaik's residence near by. Shortly afterwards the host telephoned Nilamony Routray, Orissa's Chief Minister, and after that he dialled the number of Kanhu Charan Lenka, Congress (I)

general secretary. "Yashpal is here but you are nowhere to be seen", he chided but Lenka refused to believe him till he actually spoke with Yashpal Kapoor. Then Lenka dashed to the house and the three of them conferred for more than half an hour. As they were leaving, Kapoor told Lenka that things were ripe for Orissa to go the Haryana way. Lenka replied that something would happen the next day but Patnaik is supposed to have said, "I told you that Orissa would not go the Karnataka way and I say now it will not go the Haryana way either".

Earlier Mr Kapoor had met Biju Patnaik in Delhi on January 21, after Mr Patnaik's son had invited him over to the Patnaik's house. During that meeting Mr Kapoor told Biju Patnaik that he had heard rumours that Mr Patnaik was interested in returning to Orissa as the State Chief

Minister and also that Charan Singh, the Lok Dal leader, wanted to become the Chief Minister of UP. The Congress (I) would frustrate Charan Singh's efforts. Biju Patnaik, however, told him he was not "remotely interested" in returning to State politics. Kapoor told Biju Patnaik that the Congress strategy was to bring all ex-Congressmen under the banner of the Congress (I). "But there will have to be some distinctions", Kapoor had clarified. All this was necessary for the stabilisation of politics and he had been approached by a number of MLAs and Ministers who had expressed their desire to reunite.

By the time the Orissa Cabinet met the next day, the State capital was agog with rumours and speculation about the merger. Although the Cabinet's official business had been completed by 12.30 p.m., the Ministers continued with their discussions. When eventually the Chief Minister emerged, he said nothing to the waiting newsmen. It was only when some newsmen referred to Yashpal's claims about Orissa going the Haryana way that the Chief Minister reacted, albeit with cryptic "he may say whatever he likes". He ruled out the possibility of the Orissa Lok Dal merging with the Congress (I).

Yashpal Kapoor left that evening for Puri after meeting the Press and Party colleagues. While he was away, there was a conference of Lok Dal leaders and when he returned the same night he was met by Sashibhushan Misra of the Congress (I), who is known to be close to the Chief Minister. The next morning Biju Patnaik and Nilamony Routray met the Press together and once again the Chief Minister said that the question of all Congressmen uniting had been broached by Kapoor himself the previous evening. Once again he said there was no question of a merger taking place and reiterated that Yashpal Kapoor posed no threat whatsoever to the Orissa Assembly.

Meanwhile, in an effort to find someone to head the leaderless Orissa unit of the Congress (I), Yashpal Kapoor paid a call on veteran leader Dr H. K. Mahatab. Dr Mahatab, whose younger brother had defected to the Congress (I) from the Lok Dal, had some advice instead for his visitor. He suggested the name of Dr Ram Prasad Misra, Finance Minister, from the western district of Bolangir, to head the state unit but Dr Misra could not be contacted since he was on tour. This caused Kapoor to delay his trip to Patna since he had not come within sight of accomplishing his merger mission.

Later, at a luncheon he hosted for Pressmen he said that many Ministers and MLAs of the Lok Dal had contacted him about the merger. Yet in the same breath he included the threat: "If they (the Lok Dal) want to continue in the Government, they must approach us (the Congress I)". His strategy was probably to wean away Lok Dal members with the



Yashpal Kapoor and S. D. Sharma on their return from Assam

threat but he had overlooked the fact that the Congress (I) had a strength of only 22 members in a House of 115 and that it would be difficult to engineer so many defections. According to some insiders, Kapoor had even suggested to Routray that he should join the Congress (I) along with his supporters.

Other sources claim that the Lok Dal leaders of Orissa had quoted their price for defecting. And a high price it was, too. Biju Patnaik allegedly wanted to become a Minister in the Central Cabinet, while Routray would continue as Chief Minister. In addition, one of the Lok Dal members would be organisation chief of the Congress (I) State unit. Obviously, this was not what Kapoor had wanted but before he left both Mr

Routray and Mr Patnaik told him that important decisions could not be taken in a hurry.

But hurry is the watchword for the Congress (I). They do not have too much time because of the impending Rajya Sabha elections. The majority of the members retiring from the Rajya Sabha this year (one-third of the total strength) is from the Congress (I) and so maximum representation is high on the priority list of Mrs Gandhi's Party. Its best strategy therefore is to destabilise the non-Congress (I) Governments and although Yashpal Kapoor failed in this respect, his visit has left in its wake an atmosphere of political uncertainty in the state of Orissa.

SWARUP JENA, Bhubaneswar

Bhajan Lal Operation

A matter of changing labels

EXODUS. Defection. Floor-crossing. These were some of the terms used to describe how the Janata Party lost its first State — Haryana — to the Congress (I). The man responsible was no less than Chief Minister Bhajan Lal, whose sudden shift to the Indira Congress, along with 38 other MLAs, left the Haryana unit of the Janata in a shambles and the central leadership of the Party in a state of shock.

At least one man had seen it coming: Swami Agnivesh, Janata leader from Haryana. As long ago as November he had warned the central leadership of the Party that Bhajan Lal was engaged in secret parleys with Mrs Gandhi, but no one had paid any attention to what he

said. On January 21 this year he repeated his earnest plea, this time with folded hands. "Please act immediately", he implored the Party high command. "None of you listened to me and the meeting of the Haryana Janata Legislature Party which you have called for January 23 will be too late. If you want to have a meeting, have it today."

His words were prophetic. It was the very next day, January 22, that Bhajan Lal dropped the bombshell. Among the 38 who accompanied him were Haryana Janata chief Mukhtiar Singh Malik of the erstwhile Jana Sangh, four general secretaries of the State unit of the Party and Mr Sher Singh, a close friend of Chandra Snekar and the Janata candi-



Bhajan Lal conferring with Mrs Gandhi

date from Rohtak constituency. Together with the Chief Minister they met Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay with folded hands and swelled the ranks of the Congress(I). In a memorandum to the Prime Minister, Bhajan Lal and his followers stated that it was in the interest of the country that all those who had faith in the policies of Gandhi and Nehru should extend their support to the courageous leadership of Mrs Gandhi.

Shortly after his dramatic move Bhajan Lal met correspondents and told them that he had taken his decision after informing Babu Jagjivan Ram, but what is not clear is whether his move had the approval of Babuji or not. He said he had always been a Congressman and, in effect, was only returning home. The people, he said, wanted the Congress (I) and he was only acting accordingly. He

said he would adopt Congress (I) programmes and policies and implement them immediately. The reasons given by Mukhtiar Singh Malik for his defection were even more interesting. His disenchantment with the Janata was caused by the fact that he thought it would never function as a unit and because there was no discipline. This was ironic in view of the fact that Mr Malik was the chief of the Haryana unit of the Party. His defection came as no small surprise to Haryana's Jana Sangh group for he had always stood rock-like by the RSS cadre.

Bhajan Lal had played the game of pulling the wool over others' eyes to perfection. In the third week of January the State Jana Sangh high command had decided to preempt a possible defection by the Chief Minister by informing the Haryana Governor that Bhajan Lal no longer had

CAS

a majority and that the Janata-Lok Dal combine could form an alternative Government in the state. Surprisingly enough, the idea was scrapped later when Bhajan Lal himself assured the Party leadership that he would stick to his principles and never leave the Janata. It was a pledge of faith that succeeded in lulling the growing suspicions.

After the January 22 episode the most shocked Janata MLA seemed to be Mrs Sushma Swaraj who had been extremely happy last year when Mr Bhajan Lal was installed as the CM replacing Mr Devi Lal. On January 22, speaking to journalists at the Janata Party headquarters in Delhi Mrs Swaraj termed Bhajan Lal's move as 'politically immoral', and 'double faced'. At the same Press conference Mangal Sein, another Janata MLA and the architect of Bhajan Lal's victory over Devi Lal, told reporters, 'I had strongly opposed Mr Bhajan Lal's action in withdrawing the cases against Mr Bansai Lal which was done without consulting me. I had not made an issue out of it at the specific request of the Janata Party president Mr Chandra Shekhar'. Dr Sein also claimed that Bhajan Lal had started the game right before the elections. According to him, a top Haryana civil servant who was very active during the Emergency was the go-between. In Chandigarh Mrs Kamla Verma MLA who remains with the Janata said, "A rift between Mr Bhajan Lal and other Jana Sangh ministers had occurred several months ago when the CM had taken the unilateral decision to withdraw the cases against Mr Bansai Lal and his son. We had even sent a letter to Party chief, Mr Chandra Shekhar".

When did Bhajan Lal start his operation to join the Congress (I)? If one scrutinizes the Reddy Commission's report it would be evident that Mr Bhajan Lal never tried to oppose the Congress (I). He was in the Janata Party because it served his purpose: to be in power. He had filed an affidavit before the Reddy Commission dated October 17, 1977 and his evidence before the Commission on another matter was disbelieved because he was found by the Commission to have acted in concert with Bansai Lal in making a particular appointment when he was the Agriculture Minister under the Chief Ministership of Mr Bansai Lal. The Reddy Commission has said, "...Neither Mr Bansai Lal openly took up the position at the time that Mr Bhajan Lal was a smuggler and a rapist nor did Mr Bhajan Lal openly accuse Mr Bansai Lal of spear-heading the charges against him as he now categorically states". Before the Commission Bhajan Lal had said that when a false case of rape was filed against him, he had met Mrs Gandhi and got a 'clear chit'. Thus, till now, Bhajan Lal has not forgotten the *ahsan* (favour) of Mrs Indira Gandhi. And in this context one should read the activities of Mr Bhajan Lal in the second half of 1979.

He met Mrs Gandhi during her visit to Haryana in this period and used a senior civil servant of Haryana to

"This change is to honour the people's verdict"

AMONG those who joined the Congress (I) along with Mr Bhajan Lal was Mr Gajraj Bahadur Nagar, who was a staunch supporter of the Janata Party chief Chandra Shekhar. He was, in fact, the alter ego of Chandra Shekhar in Haryana politics. For Mr Nagar, the Food Minister of Haryana, it was the "new light" shown by the people's verdict in the Lok Sabha polls which made him decide to join the Congress (I). As he says: "This change of sides is only to honour the people's verdict". When asked by a journalist whether or not he accepted Mr Sanjay Gandhi as his leader, he said: "Yes, Mr Sanjay Gandhi is my leader". "You say that you wanted to honour the people's verdict. Would it not be better if instead of defecting to the Congress (I), you seek

a fresh mandate from the people?" queried another journalist. Mr Nagar replied: "We realised that the people rejected the Janata Party and showed that they favoured the Congress (I). So we acted accordingly and accepted their preference".

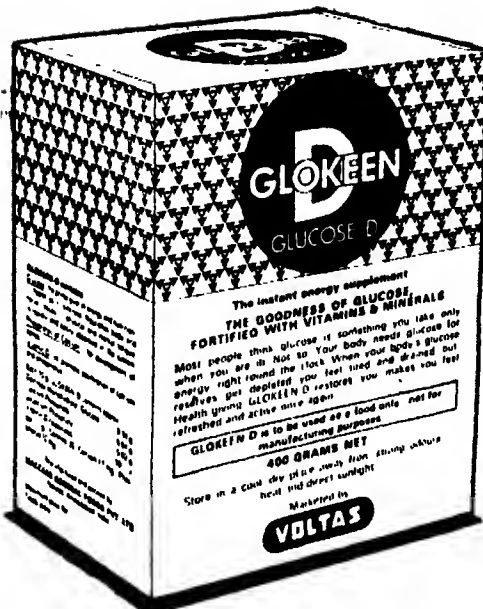
Mr Khurshid Ahmed, Local Self Government Minister of Haryana, gives a simple reason for his defection from the Janata Party to the Congress (I). He says: "The whole herd was moving that way. I also responded to the call to join the bar". When asked if he subscribed to the five-point programme of Mr Sanjay Gandhi, he said: "We have just joined the class. Let us open the new book".

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develop contacts within Mrs Gandhi's camp. Bansi Lal served this purpose best. The Janata party had split and Bhajan Lal's ministry would not have lasted had the Congress (I) withdrawn its support. The master plan, therefore, was chalked out by Mr Bhajan Lal himself. At the state level he befriended Bansi Lal and within the Janata Party he convinced the Central leadership that he and only he could check the spreading influence of the Lok Dal in Haryana. The Janata leadership, which was more interested in finishing the Lok Dal than Bansi Lal's supporters got trapped. They supported Bhajan Lal against Mr Devi Lal and Mrs Chandrawati. As Bansi Lal was the main contact between him and Mrs Gandhi, Bhajan Lal in his own style withdrew the cases against Bansi Lal. And this was done within a very short period. His law secretary asked the DM to withdraw cases on September 20 1979; the state Assembly was due to meet in just four days. The assistant public prosecutor carried the orders the next day. The judicial magistrate, Bhiwani sanctioned the withdrawals on September 21. But Mr Bhajan Lal was absolutely clear in his mind. On September 22 and 27 he said that other cases against Mr Bansi Lal might also be withdrawn. He declared, "If our legal advisers say that any of these cases has no base, we will not hesitate to withdraw it". Interestingly, one of the four cases withdrawn was the case of demolition of the Ghanta Ghar and other properties in Bhiwani which was well documented. This only showed the intention of Mr Bhajan Lal.

Right after the Lok Sabha elections Bhajan Lal became active again. First, he contacted Mrs Gandhi, then his Party MLAs and Ministers. He told them: "Indiraji ki hawa hai. Vo

Vidhan Sabha bhang kar daingi. Ham sab har jayenge. Devi Lal unsay samjhauta kar sakta hai. Vo samjhauta kare ussay behtar hai ki hum kar lein" (The wave is in favour of Indiraji. She can dissolve the Assembly. We will lose. Devi Lal can come to an understanding with her. It is better that we come to an understanding with her).

On January 26 this year, when Mr Surendra Mohan, general secretary of the Janata Party visited Chandigarh, the Haryana Janata Legislature Party's meeting was in session, Bhajan Lal and others were analysing the causes of the debacle of the Janata Party in the Lok Sabha elections. Swami Agnivesh once again told Mr Mohan that Bhajan Lal was planning to defect to the Congress (I). Mr Balwant Tayal also told him: "Ab ham ja rahe hai. Jana Sangh ke saath baat ban nahi sakti" (Now I am going. I cannot get along with the Jana Sangh). On the night of January 17-18 Mrs Sushma Swaraj and Swami Agnivesh airdashed to Delhi to warn the Central leadership again. But no one paid any heed. When it did, it was too late. On the night of January 21, when it was clear that Bhajan Lal would defect, the Janata leaders got busy. They tried to contact as many Janata MLAs from Haryana as possible. Sudendra Mohan and Krishna Kant contacted Mr Tayal. They even tried to contact Mr Gajraj Nagar. Even Morarji Desai telephoned Mr Tayal. But it did not help. Bhajan Lal had become a Congress (I) Chief Minister.

Now, the one question which is being asked in political circles is: How long will Bhajan Lal remain the Chief Minister?

UDAYAN SHARMA,
Chandigarh

changed his stand on two major issues, hoping that it would help the AIADMK win a substantial number of seats if a mid-term poll is forced on Tamil Nadu. The announcement regarding the relaxation of prohibition laws was made on January 24. MGR, who always swore by prohibition and who had bitterly criticised his predecessor for "suspending" prohibition in 1971, announced unexpectedly that prohibition rules would be relaxed to a great extent. The result: Tamil Nadu will be "wet" for all practical purposes. Under the revised rules, the age limit for securing liquor permits would be reduced from 45 to 30, and the fee from Rs 100 to Rs 25. The applicant need not submit a medical certificate as is the rule now. And over a lakh of prohibition-related cases would be withdrawn. In respect of those thousands undergoing imprisonment for consuming liquor, their unexpired portion would be remitted.

According to the new rules, drinking will be allowed in certain sections of restaurants and hotels, and even people without permits would be allowed to consume alcohol. Action will be taken only against those who cause drunken fracas. Congress (I) leaders have bitterly criticised MGR for this "relaxation". This indicates that MGR's efforts to make peace with the Congress (I) have not been successful.

MGR has also promised a new deal to the backward classes. A Government order fixing the income ceiling of Rs 9,000 per annum for concessions to backward classes was issued last year and it caused a number of controversies. The DMK which waged a number of agitations against it had planned a three-stage stir from January 29 throughout the State. While dropping the income norm for concessions, the Chief Minister also raised the quota reservation for backward classes in Government services and in professional colleges to 50 per cent from the existing 31 per cent. While welcoming these moves, the DMK leaders declared that MGR couldn't escape the task of facing the electorate: "His corruption-ridden Government of non-performance cannot continue forever", stated a DMK spokesman. "He may even find it difficult to go back to films, but then that's his business."

Following the demand for fresh elections to the Assembly, MGR tried to placate the opposition Parties by announcing civic elections for over 13,600 local bodies throughout the State. This certainly hasn't satisfied the Congress (I) and the DMK. "He should have taken the cue from Devaraj Urs and resigned long time ago", G. P. V. Raju, a Congress-(I) leader from Madurai said. "By their verdict the people have disproved that the women of Tamil Nadu are solidly behind MGR". R. V. Swaminathan, of the Congress (I), who was elected from Sivaganga recently warned MGR that if he did not step down, he would be forced to.

ARTHUR PAIS, Madras

MGR bends over backwards

But this may not save him

DID MGR offer to merge his AIADMK totally with the Congress (I) to avert a mid-term poll in Tamil Nadu? According to DMK chief M. Karunanidhi, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and his Finance Minister, K. Manoharan, spent a couple of days at Delhi trying to impress upon the Congress (I) to allow MGR and his lieutenants to rule over the State. Though both the Congress (I) and the DMK have been demanding the resignation of the AIADMK Minister following the complete rout of the AIADMK-led alliance in the recent Parliamentary election (in which the AIADMK could get only two seats), MGR has just refused to give in. "The people's verdict was not against the State Government", MGR had declared soon after the poll results confirmed that the Congress (I) had

won 21 seats, including one from Pondicherry, and its poll-ally DMK had won all the 16 seats it had contested. "The AIADMK has suffered a big defeat", conceded MGR but hastened to add that the AIADMK and its poll-ally, the CPI(M), had retained their seats in two by-elections held to the State Assembly along with the Lok Sabha poll. "This clearly shows that while expressing their preference for Mrs Gandhi to take up the leadership at the Centre, the people of the State wanted the AIADMK to continue to rule the State", MGR added. Of course, he ignored the results of the elections in the Union Territory of Pondicherry where the AIADMK couldn't even get a single seat out of 30.

Despite MGR's brave talk that his Government would survive, he has

Indian biochemists create history

TIRTHANKAR GHOSH reports on a significant new discovery in a CSIR laboratory in Hyderabad



From left to right: E. S. P. Reddy, Dr P. M. Bhargava and an assistant

pride when he said: "Indian science has reached a level of maturity and in some places we can provide the leadership."

The discovery was reported widely. *Nature*, one of the top ten scientific journals among the world's 250,000, devoted an unprecedented seven pages to the papers submitted by Dr Bhargava and his colleagues — Mr E. S. P. Reddy and Dr Karl Heinz Scheit. Since non-scientific people came to know of this major Indian breakthrough from a distorted report in the international news-magazine, *Newsweek* of October 1, 1979, I questioned Dr Bhargava on the facts published. *Newsweek* had stated that the protein had been discovered "by accident during studies of artificial insemination of cattle in India." Was this the truth? "No", said Dr Bhargava and he was very determined about it. "I was certain that it existed nearly 20 years ago". And he had documentary evidence to substantiate his beliefs. In 1957, Dr Bhargava had written about the protein and its probable existence in *Nature* itself. In fact, the first of the two papers in *Nature* of June 21, 1979, (the articles written on the discovery) entitled, 'Seminalplasmin — an antimicrobial protein from bovine seminal plasma' has at the top of its bibliography Dr Bhargava's paper of 1957.

The protein, according to the scientists who worked on it, was isolated from freshly ejaculated bull seminal plasma — the liquid part of semen in which spermatozoa are suspended in their natural state. The isolation of the protein, its antibiotic activity and the way it acts in a whole bacterial cell were mentioned in the first paper in *Nature* authored jointly by Dr Bhargava and Mr Reddy who has been working for his PhD degree under Dr Bhargava. Mr Reddy, Shyam to his colleagues, is one of India's bright, young scientists who played a major role in the discovery. I asked Mr Shyam Reddy, who looks much older and wiser than he really is, probably because of his thinning hair, how the protein had been named. "The new protein possesses anti-microbial properties and is the fourth anti-microbial protein from mammalian sources. It is very similar to penicillin. So we named it with an ending '...in' like penicillin and streptomycin". The protein acts on a wide range of bacteria (both gram-positive and gram-negative) as well as yeast or fungus. Seminalplasmin enters the bacterial cell and inhibits the growth of the ribosomal ribonucleic acid (a specific type of ribonucleic acid or RNA which is essential for the synthesis of the protein in the bacteria) and thus destroys the bacteria. RNAs are essential for the reproduction process; seminalplasmin thus attacks and destroys the bacteria by curbing

AH, you must be from Sunday. Please come in." A firm, warm handshake and I am ushered into a cool air-conditioned office by a middle-aged man, with thick-framed glasses, in a colourful, handloom bush shirt. Dr P. M. Bhargava hardly looks the eminent scientist that he is. With his salt and pepper sideburns he can pass for a successful businessman and administrator. The appointment was at 11.00 and I was a few minutes late. I had literally run into Dr Bhargava's first floor office (Room 235) of the Regional Research Laboratory, Hyderabad. Dr Bhargava, director of the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) at the Regional Research Laboratory, a constituent lab of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), is one of India's stalwarts in the frontier science of biochemistry. Room 235 is where a few months ago history was created.

Dr Bhargava, a soft-spoken, ever smiling man welcomes me in. I question him on the discovery of the unusual new protein — seminalplasmin — in the CCMB lab under his guidance. Seminalplasmin was isolated from bull semen which is always closely linked with reproduction and life. The recent discovery, however, has proved that it has anti-microbial properties and successfully destroys bacteria.

An anti-microbial agent is a chemical compound which either destroys or inhibits the growth of microscopic organisms. The scientists led by Dr Bhargava have found out that bull semen's antibiotic qualities are as powerful as penicillin.

It took Dr Bhargava and his team 20 long years of research to isolate the protein. The isolation was the fruit of their pioneering role — perhaps, one of the first undertaken successfully by Indian scientists. The senior scientist made no bones about this. I could sense the feeling of

its reproduction. The researchers found that seminalplasmin possessed a quality which they termed the "permeation principle" which enabled it to actually enter bacterial cells. Once within the cell it binds to and inactivates the enzyme known as RNA polymerase (enzymes are catalysts in biological reactions) which is responsible for the synthesis of all RNAs in the cell.

With these qualities, what uses could seminalplasmin be put to? Dr Bhargava's answer was that of a true scientist, "You see", he told me, "I am a scientist and like all (scientists), I have a very curious mind. Now, the excitement is over since my question is answered". I press on with my original question to tell me about the import of the discovery. Dr Bhargava explains that their part of the job had been done and it was left to researchers in the medical profession to find various uses from it for mankind. However, he could forward some possibilities. The material, in powder form, could be used as a reagent for further scientific research: In the not too distant future scientists will be able to understand how the transfer of genetic material to protein takes place. Apart from helping fellow scientists what would the commercial value of the discovery amount to? A very important factor had to be kept in mind: whether it was toxic or not. Unless the reaction of seminalplasmin, when injected, is discovered any drug consisting of the protein cannot be taken internally. (This precaution, of course, has to be taken for all drugs.) Nevertheless, for the time being, since seminalplasmin acts on fungus, it could be used externally as a protection against candida infections prevalent among swimmers and for topical applications of infections of the female reproductive tract. Mr Shyam Reddy hoped that it would also work against VD. Internationally well-known pharmaceutical companies have expressed interest in the possibilities of the newly discovered protein.

O THER than the interest shown by the pharmaceutical companies, scientists the world over are interested in doing further research with the protein. Indeed, Dr Bhargava and Mr Reddy gave the scientists the impetus when they declared that free samples could be obtained from the CSIR in Delhi. However, the CCMB, and the scientists concerned have been flooded with letters from many researchers. I saw a few of them. There was one from Dr Jonathan Lawrie of the department of biochemistry and biophysics in the school of medicine, University of California, USA, who had written to say that he wanted to use seminalplasmin "as an inhibitor of RNA polymerase" Chia C. Pao of the University of Mississippi Medical Center, USA wrote to ask for a

sample to "test the ability of this protein in synthesising some of the Guanosine polyphosphates".

The letter which struck me most was from Professor Marc Bygdeman of the Unit of Human Reproduction, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Karolinka Sjukhuset at Stockholm, Sweden, in which he mentions that the findings of Dr Bhargava's team may relate to human reproduction. Professor Bygdeman and his team had found out that "subclinical 'genital infections' play an important role in human reproduction (infertility) ... Since seminalplasmin may play an important part in the local defence system we would like to investigate its activity towards the bacterial isolate

Dr Karl Heinz Scheit of the Max Planck Institute fur Biophysikalische Chemie in Goettingen, West Germany, whose name had been mentioned in the *Newsweek* report. Indeed, *Newsweek* had reported the discovery in such a way that readers were made to believe that most of the work done was by Dr Scheit. Neither the Indian scientists nor their laboratory was named. Dr Bhargava recounted how Dr Scheit became interested and later involved in the project. The German scientist had been on a visit to the CCMB under an exchange programme for scientists on a Sunday in February 1975. "I remember it was my birthday", said Dr Bhargava. Dr Scheit was like many other foreign and Indian scientists who constantly visit the



Dr P. M. Bhargava's group

from couples with a suspected bacterial genesis of infertility". In a Press conference held on July 26, 1979, Dr Bhargava had said that "the existence of seminalplasmin in semen may have some interesting and important implications in regard to the evaluation of the urge to mate in the higher species: those of the female of the species who were willing to have intercourse, received seminalplasmin from the male and were protected against infections of their reproductive tract at a time early in human evolution when there were no man-made antibiotics. Those who were unwilling, suffered from the infections and could have been slowly eliminated". It was the belief of Dr Bhargava and Mr Reddy that the protein could provide protection either to the male or to the female through deposition of seminalplasmin in the reproductive tract during sexual intercourse, or to both.

While on the topic of foreign scientists, I asked Dr Bhargava about

CCMB labs. The whole week had been a busy one, especially for Dr Bhargava, who is not merely an administrator but is keenly involved in all the research going on in the lab and most of the time takes an active part in the experiments. He had not found any time to meet Dr Scheit and as a result invited him in the weekly scientists' meeting where progress and difficulties in the respective researches are discussed and thrashed out. In the course of the discussions the German scientist heard about the experiments in seminalplasmin. He offered to collaborate on the project and carry out experiments in his lab. From this chance meeting came out what Professor M. G. K. Menon, Director-General of the CSIR, described as "perhaps the most successful scientific collaboration — in the true sense of the word — between India and Germany".

The work of Dr Bhargava's group and Dr Scheit's group complemented



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each other "admirably". To lay readers who are more interested in the commercial aspect of the discovery there is good news. Seminaipiasmin has been patented internationally by Dr P. M. Bhargava, Mr E. S. P. Reddy and Dr Kari Heinz Scheit. The patents have been assigned on a 75-25 per cent basis jointly to the CSIR and the Max Planck Society and is perhaps, the first Indo-German patent. That the Indian scientists played a major role is evident from the ratio of the royalty.

The attitude of the Western Press to the role of "third world scientists" in this discovery was one of total disregard. Dr Bhargava said that the *Newsweek* story was inaccurate and "upsetting". The Press release of Max Planck Gesellschaft was equally so. Mr E. S. P. Reddy's name had not even been included in the release and Dr Scheit apologised profusely for the fault in a letter, dated October 2, 1979. He overlooked Mr Reddy's name in the first draft of the Press release but corrected it in the second draft, which was, however, not released. Dr Scheit was frustrated, as he revealed in the letter, at the behaviour of journalists who "either printed the whole text of the release or simply a shortened version". Dr Scheit had not even been personally contacted by newspapermen for interviews. His "depression" resulted "from the notion that once the inter-



Seminaipiasmin's effect on bacteria

national Press has taken over an information, the individuals concerned are the mercy of journalists and practically helpless". Dr Kari Heinz Scheit had "made one fruitless attempt to argue with the German

newsmagazine *Spiegel*. They did not even respond". "But Dr Scheit is a fine man", said Dr Bhargava. And Mr Shyam Reddy, who played a major role in the discovery since he sorted out the obstruction to the protein, remains undaunted. In fact, he told me with a glint in his eye as if trying to hold on to an important secret that he was on to something more exciting than the discovery of seminaipiasmin.

When I was leaving the laboratory with its heaters, refrigerators and retorts I found a card under the glass top of Mr Shyam Reddy's writing desk across which I had been sitting. On the card was inscribed a quotation from Buddha which is certainly the model on which Dr Bhargava and his colleagues work and is perhaps the basis for all scientific quest:

Believe nothing
Merely because you have been told it
Or because it is traditional
Or because you yourself imagined it
Do not believe what your teacher
tells you
Merely out of respect for the teacher
But whatever after due examination
and analysis
You find conducive to the good,
the benefit,
The welfare of all beings,
That doctrine believe and cling to
And take it as your guide.

An unusual CSIR lab

I ASK anyone who joins the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) to come in as daughters-in-law of this organisation not as a son-in-law. They come in to share our joys and sorrows". Dr P. M. Bhargava, the head of the CCMB was speaking about the unique method of recruiting scientists for the centre. Anyone who is qualified enough to join the centre applies with a bio-data. If the recruitment committee finds the person fit enough he is asked to visit the centre to see for himself the facilities and also decide for himself whether he wants to join. This brings about the spirit of dedication that one finds among the centre's staff. The CCMB can be judged on par with the only other research lab of its kind in the country, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Bombay. The CCMB, since it started functioning from April 1, 1977, has acquired international acclaim. Many eminent scientists visit the centre and a growing number of Indian scientists working abroad want to join it.

The objectives of the CCMB are very clear-cut. It is meant to provide "the necessary thrust in the

areas of molecular and cellular biology. Discoveries in these fields have not only contributed solutions to some of the basic questions concerning life processes, but have also found application in agriculture, veterinary, medical science and in industry". The centre is a semi-autonomous unit and is headed by Dr P. M. Bhargava. It has a separate budget, a separate Scientific Advisory Committee, and full academic and financial autonomy. The scientists are a dedicated lot and Dr Bhargava himself heads and actively participates in one of the two current research activities. The other is led by Dr M. W. Pandit.

Dr Bhargava through his connections with the international scientific community has helped the centre to flourish. One of the things he takes pride in showing are the eminent scientist J. B. S. Haldane's lifetime's collection of books which has been donated to the centre. In course of time he has hopes of forming a Haldane museum. The books were given to him and his wife, Manorama Bhargava, as a token of gratitude for the care of J. B. S. Haldane's sick sister who was a beneficiary of the books.

The CCMB receives a large number of scientists from abroad who deliver lectures and sometimes work in close cooperation with the centre's scientists. The list of visitors is impressive. There was Prof C. R. Austin of the Physiological Laboratory, University of Cambridge, in whose laboratory Drs Steptoe and Edwards did their successful research on the test tube baby. Nobel Laureate Sir John Kendrew had already visited the centre. Among the others are Prof Marianne Grunberg Manago, Prof F. Gros, Members of the French Academy of Sciences, Nobel Laureates Prof R. P. Porter, Dr F. H. Crick and Dr Max Delbruck.

At present the CCMB is housed in its parent Regional Research Laboratory (RRL) complex. However, a 12-acre plot within the RRL campus has been allotted for construction of separate buildings for the CCMB. Dr Bhargava and his colleagues are personally seeing great interest in the design and construction so that they can be utilised to their fullest capacity in the future.

T. G.



The author was Flag Officer Commanding, Eastern Naval Command. The extracts are from his book "No Surrender" (Vikas Publishing House).

The book is an account of the Indo-Pakistan War in the Bay of Bengal, 1971.

By VICE ADMIRAL N. KRISHNAN

WE had to be on a state of general alert for harbour defence by day and night. Vishakhapatnam posed a very special problem. The main road was running through the Naval Area and all ships were on public view. There were no restrictions on merchant ships. For example, a general alert for harbour defence was deemed necessary when an 11,000 tonne ship flying the flag of a West Asian country entered the harbour with a complement that was much more than one would normally expect and we had information through one of the Bengali sailors on board that many of them had signed on in March of this year (1971). They looked like naval officers and sailors. Since we could not take any legal action against them, we literally had to put a cordon-sanitaire around the ship.

Again, we had a visit from a second ship flying a "flag of convenience" of a West African country. The ship was owned by a Pakistani partnership with shipping interests in a kingdom which is an archipelago in the Indian Ocean. The crew of this 12,000-ton ship were almost entirely Pakistanis. They were signed on at Colombo on October 12. Their passports and sailing papers were generally in order but we had strong reasons to suspect that the ship was manned by a Pakistani naval crew. In the context of the fresh crew being taken on board, this was significant.

Again, on October 26 during a black-out exercise in Vishakhapatnam, a few of our men, disguised, were fishing with rod and line from a boat in the harbour. Their hook got caught to an American sailor from a US merchant ship. He came up and threw an inflatable rubber bag into the boat and asked for a match. He struck the match and held it aloft, as if it were a signal and then slid back into the water. He was later apprehended on the wharf. The bag contained, amongst other things, Dexadrine Pep Tablets, a knife, plastic explosives. The sailor was from Kentucky State in the United States. Even though he claimed that he was mentally unsound, I was quite convinced that he was a mercenary exploring the harbour for intelligence purposes.

I received instructions from NHQ that I should proceed to New Delhi and be prepared to brief the three Service Chiefs and the Defence Minister on the plans of my command in the event of war. This I did on November 23. Both the Chief of the Army Staff and the Defence Secretary asked me several searching questions pertaining to the plan.

That night, President Yahya Khan made an extraordinary statement that "he would be away fighting a

war in the next ten days". On November 24, he declared a State of Emergency throughout Pakistan. Though India did not react with a similar declaration we knew that the die was cast.

From my point of view, it was pretty clear that Pakistan would have deployed the Ghazi in the Bay of Bengal and part of the pre-emptive strike would be an attempt to sink the Vikrant.

I had recorded earlier that part of my plan to counter this awesome contingency was to put into effect as many deceptive measures as possible. I had already sailed the Fleet away from Madras on November 13. On November 24, with the certainty that the hunter had arrived, I was very uneasy in my mind — even though the Fleet had been tucked away under maximum security, poised and ready to strike at the shortest notice.

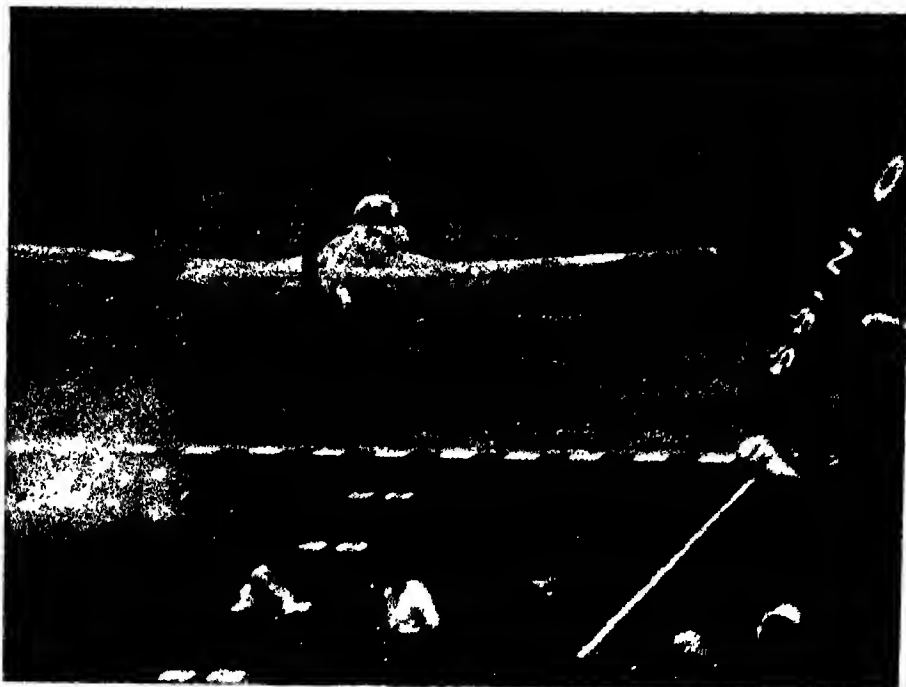
HAVING sailed the Fleet away to safety, the major task was to deceive the enemy into thinking that the Vikrant was where she was not and lure the Ghazi to where we could attack her.

I spoke to the Naval Officer-in-Charge, Madras on the telephone and told him that Vikrant, now off Vishakhapatnam, would be arriving at Madras and would require an alongside berth, provisions and other logistic needs. Captain Duckworth thought I had gone stark raving mad that I should discuss so many operational matters over the telephone, I told him to alert contractors for rations, to speak to the Port Trust that we wanted a berth alongside for Vikrant at Madras, etc.

In Vishakhapatnam, we ordered much more rations, especially meat and fresh vegetables from our contractors to whom it must have been obvious that this meant the presence of the Fleet on or off Vishakhapatnam. I was banking on bazaar rumours being picked up by spies and relayed to Pakistan. I had no doubt that such spies did exist and I hoped that they would do their duty.

During the several weeks before the war, we had taken special pains to contact the various fishing communities in and around Vishakhapatnam and motivate them to act as a sort of visual lookout for anything out of the ordinary that they may see when out fishing. This meant explaining to them all about oil slicks, what a submarine looks like, what sort of tell-tale evidence to look for and so on. They were briefed on exactly what to do with any information that they gathered.

I had established a very close rapport with the Collector, Achanta and the Chairman of the Port Trust, Sambhamurthy. The Civil Defence organization under the Collector was put through a series of drills including blackouts, etc. I was never worried about air attack but I didn't tell anyone that my real worry was mining of the harbour entrances or



Aircraft taking off from INS Vikrant

attack on our ships by the "Devil" (appropriately the Ghazi was the ex-Diablo, meaning devil!)

We decided to use INS Rajput as a decoy to try and deceive the Pakistani belief that Vikrant was in or around Vishakhapatnam. Rajput was sailed to proceed about 160 miles off Vishakhapatnam. She was given a large number of signals with instructions that she should clear the same from sea. Heavy wireless traffic is one means for the enemy to suspect the whereabouts of a big ship. We intentionally breached security by making an unclassified signal in the form of a private telegram, allegedly from one of Vikrant's sailors, asking about the welfare of his mother "seriously ill".

Vice Admiral N. Krishnan

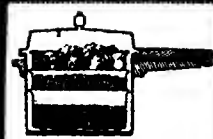


Our deception plan had worked only too well. In a secret signal which we recovered from the sunken Ghazi, Commodore, Submarines, in Karachi sent a signal to Ghazi informing her that "Intelligence indicate Carrier in port" and that she should proceed to Vishakhapatnam with all despatch!

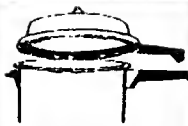
On the evening of December 1971, just as I entered the house, the telephone rang and an excited PTI correspondent said: "Admiral, Pakistan has attacked several of our cities from the air. Delhi is in darkness and under attack." On the hot line this was confirmed by the Collector and I asked him to order total blackout, switching off all navigational lights including the Dolphin Nose light house. He asked me if I expected an air attack and I told him "Please do as I say, I will explain later," and rang off. My wife was sitting out on the verandah with a couple of friends and as I rushed out to the waiting car, I told her "We are at war with Pakistan, I am off. See you later."

By the time I arrived at the Maritime Operations Room, orders for commencement of hostilities had been received, the shore defences of Vishakhapatnam were immediately put on alert and the Coast Battery was brought to the First Degree of Readiness. I had already decided that the Rajput should also join the rest of the Eastern Fleet for operations off Bangladesh. I fully realized that I would be sending away the only operational ship left. But this was a calculated risk. The aim must be sustained at all costs and this meant total blockade of East Pakistan. Everything that floated and carried a gun should be out there and doing this job and if, in the process, the base was exposed, so it had to be. But before she left,

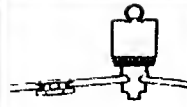
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we would have a go at the enemy who I felt in my very bones, was not very far off. This latter statement is difficult for many to understand. I once had the opportunity and great privilege of meeting that very celebrated hunter, Jim Corbett, when I was doing a tour of duty in Almora in the Kumaon Hills. He told me that when trying to hunt down a man-eater, he would think of nothing but the quarry for weeks on end and when the final hour of reckoning was near, he would know instinctively that danger was imminent. It would be futile for me to convince anyone that I had the same feeling, presentiment, intuition, whatever you may like to call it, that night—I had never felt so sure that the mortal enemy had arrived.

The Ghazi story, as related below is pieced together from much evidence that has been collected from the sunken submarine itself and detailed analysis of track charts of the attacking ship, INS Rajput as well as that of the Ghazi. From a recovered chart, it is clearly revealed that the Ghazi sailed from Karachi on November 14, on her marauding mission. She was 400 miles off Bombay on November 16, off Ceylon on November 19, and entered the Bay of Bengal on November 20. She was looking for Vikrant off Madras on November 23. Alas, for her, ten days too late!

I sent for Lt. Cdr. Inder Singh, the Commanding Officer of the Rajput for detailed briefing; as soon as she completed fuelling she must leave harbour. I had already ordered all navigational aids to be switched off, so greatest care in navigation was necessary. Once clear of the harbour, he must assume that an enemy submarine was in the vicinity. If our deception plan had worked, the enemy would be prowling about looking for the Vikrant. In the dark-

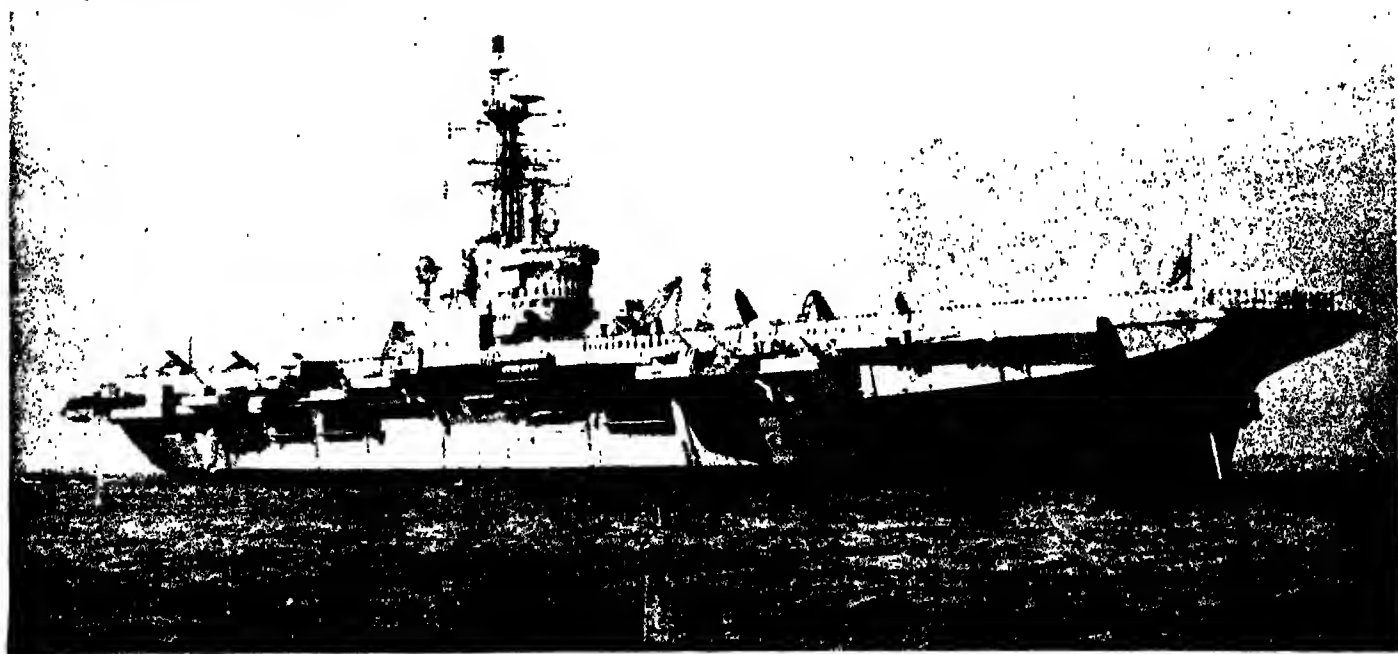
ness, he might easily mistake one of the merchantmen outside for the carrier and have a go. He might even be attempting to lay a mine-field. Because of the total blackout and navigational hazards, he might even be foolhardy to be on the surface. Since I wanted the Rajput out in the operational area as soon as possible, I could not give Inder Singh any time to carry out a hunt and he could not tarry. But before clearing the outer harbour, he could drop a few charges at random to put the fear of god into the enemy and deter him from any of his nefarious activities.

THE Rajput sailed before midnight of 3/4 and, on clearing harbour, proceeded along the narrow channel. Having got clear, the Commanding Officer saw what he thought was a severe disturbance in the water, about half a mile ahead. He rightly assumed that this might be a submarine diving. He closed in on the spot at speed and dropped two charges at the position. It has been subsequently established that the position where the charges were dropped was so close to the position of the wreck of the Ghazi that some damage to the latter is a very high probability. The Rajput, on completion of her mission, proceeded on her course in order to carry out her main mission. A little later, a very loud explosion was heard by the Coast Battery who reported the same to the Maritime Operations Room. The time of this explosion was 0015 hours. The clock recovered from the Ghazi showed that it had stopped functioning at the same time. Several thousand people waiting to hear the Prime Minister's broadcast to nation also heard the explosion and many came out thinking that it was an earthquake.

Our naval divers as well as underwater television camera have established that the forward part of the submarine had been completely blown off though everything aft of the Conning Tower was there. From the position of the rudder of the Ghazi, the extent of damage she had suffered, and the notations on charts recovered, the situation has been assessed by naval experts as follows. The Ghazi had evidently come up to periscope or surface depth to establish her navigational position, an operation which was made extremely difficult by the blackout and the switching off of all navigational lights. At this point of time, she probably saw or heard a destroyer approaching her, almost on a reciprocal course. This is a frightening sight at the best of times and she obviously dived in a tremendous hurry and at the same time put her rudder hard over in order to get away to seaward. It is possible that in her desperate crash dive, her nose must have hit the shallow ground hard when she bottomed. It seems likely that a fire broke out on board forward where, in all probability there were mines, in addition to the torpedoes fully armed. Whatever may be the cause of the final explosion, it was quite enough to seal the fate of the Ghazi for ever.

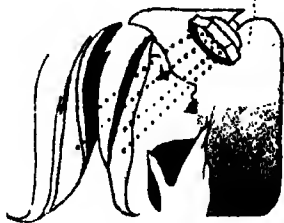
As per our arrangement with them, some fishermen reported oil patches and some flotsam. The Command Diving team was rushed to the spot and commenced detailed investigations. The divers established that there was a definite submerged object some distance out seawards, at a depth of 150 feet of water and that it was a probable submarine. Even though there were a number of floating objects picked up, there was nothing to indicate the identity of the submarine. Everything had American markings. I told the Chief

Aircraft carrier INS Vikrant



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of the Naval Staff that personally I was convinced that we had bagged the Ghazi. I was somewhat taken aback when he said: "Look, there have already been three claims from elsewhere of having sunk Pakistan submarines. Have a heart, we couldn't sink all of them in one night!" I said: "But dammit Sir, mine's out there. My divers have seen the bloody thing lying dead as a doornail." Anyway, like Othello, he wanted "ocular proof" that it was the Ghazi, before authorizing the announcement. This was easier said than done. Diving operations were extremely difficult and highly hazardous as the sea was very choppy and the divers were operating some 150 feet below. The boat I had was not a suitable one to conduct such operations. By Sunday December 5, we were able to establish from the silhouette and other characteristics that the submarine was in fact the Ghazi. But there was no means of ingress into the submarine as all entry hatches from the Conning Tower aft were tightly screwed down from the inside.

In the mean time, the Chief of Naval Staff had arranged for an Air Force aircraft to be positioned in Vishakhapatnam so that "the ocular proof" that he insisted on could be flown to Delhi before the announcement was made.

On the third day, a diver managed to open the Conning Tower hatch and one dead body was recovered. As the hatch was opened, it was clogged up with bloated dead bodies and it was quite a job to clear the same to make an entrance. It must have taken a phenomenal amount of courage for the divers to enter the submarine, with rotting flesh all around, and not knowing whether they could come out of the hell-hole alive. But then, throughout my association with the gallant men of the diving cadre, I found the same display of courage and devotion to duty and a total disregard of personal danger whilst working under the most hazardous conditions. The hydrographic correction book of PNS Ghazi and one sheet of paper with the official seal of the Commanding Officer of PNS Ghazi were also recovered. A little later, three more dead bodies were floated out. I ordered photographs to be taken of the dead bodies. Later, according to Naval Custom, they were given sailors burial at sea. The aircraft standing by finally took off for Delhi the next morning with the evidence.

We have been able to recover considerable material to confirm the evil designs of Pakistan to strike a pre-emptive blow against us. As early as November 22, Pakistan had deployed four submarines, armed all with torpedoes, and assumed the precautionary stage on November 23. Ghazi was after the Vikrant but Vikrant and the Fleet were hundreds of miles away from the base and ready to retaliate in a bold offensive should the Pakistanis put in the



The Indian Navy helps out during army exercises

pre-emptive attack. That the Ghazi was outside Vishakhapatnam has shown beyond any shadow of doubt Pakistan's deliberate pre-planned attack on India.

Thus, within five hours of the first strike by Pakistan against our airfields, Pakistan had paid a very heavy price and lost the largest and most prestigious submarine of her navy. More blows were soon to follow that would send the enemy reeling on to ignominious surrender.

The destruction of the Ghazi captured the imagination of the people

and hit the headlines in the newspapers. Hundreds of letters and telegrams of congratulations poured in from persons in all walks of life, high and low. One of them wanted to name his son, born at the time of the sinking as "Ghazi Mardhana Rao." I dissuaded him from saddling his son for life with such a hideous name! But the importance of the event, to me, was that the threat to Vikrant had been disposed of and I was able to signal the Fleet that I had a dead submarine at my doorstep and they should be relentless



Vice Admiral N. Krishnan reviews captured Pakistani tanks

and audacious in mounting their attack on the enemy.

YES, the sea war had started extremely well for us. Within hours of the enemy's first strike against us, the Ghazi lay dead at our very doorstep. The very names "White Tiger" and "Cobra" are enough to strike terror into any one's heart. These are the names of the air squadrons of Seahawks and Alizes carried aboard the Vikrant. The quick ferocity of the one and the stealthy but venomous bite of the other were displayed in ample measure in the days that followed. On the morning of December 4, Vikrant and her ships were within striking distance of our first target, Cox's Bazaar. The first strike of eight Seahawks screamed off the angled deck of Vikrant at 11 am—destination Cox's Bazaar airfield. The very first foray into enemy territory drew blood immediately and we had retaliated within hours of Pakistan's futile pre-emptive attack the previous night. After taking on board all our aircraft that returned safely, the Fleet sailed on—this time for Chittagong.

The Tigers were again airborne in the afternoon. The battleground now was the heavily fortified Chittagong airfield. A very hot reception awaited them but the screaming jets evaded the medium and heavy ack-ack gun fire. They struck with devastating effect. The bleeding kill when counted gave the following impressive figure: One harbour and control tower, damaged, one fuel dump set ablaze and two gunboats hit, immobilised and sunk, six Pakis-

tani merchant ships in outer anchorage attacked, two damaged heavily.

Our flyers brought home all aircraft safely, though one was hit by a bullet. The damage was quickly repaired.

While the "Tigers" were digesting their kill, the Alizes, otherwise known as "Cobras" slowly but surely kept up the pressure with long night raids, which gave no respite to the enemy.

It was for the first time that the carrier INS Vikrant went into offensive during the current hostilities, but her pilots had begun to write the first glorious chapter in her history with their bravery, courage and determination as evidence by the magnificent record and achievements of the day.

After getting complete reports, I signalled the Fleet: "A good day's work. Continue strikes tomorrow on Chittagong, Do Hazari, Chalna, Khulna, Mongla."

BY December 5, the sea war was gathering momentum, and I decided to throw everything I had into the fighting. Guldar and Gharial, both landing ships for tanks and the most unimaginable and unlikely ships for any naval operations other than for landing purposes, were ordered to join the fray as part of the Eastern Fleet. The Rajput, that old veteran, resurrected almost from a grave, was already in the battle area. Launched first on March 21, 1942, she had outlived her normal span of life of 20 years by a decade and here

she was fighting the finest battle of her life, like some knight in shining armour!

I threw in for good measure, the Magar, another landing ship tank. We had acquired her from the UK second hand and in not too good a condition as early as 1949, capable only of a speed of nine knots mounting guns of a calibre that I am ashamed to name! There were many who had pressed for scrapping Magar some six years ago and here she was sailing the seas like some bold centurion ready to take on all and sundry, come hell or high water!

For logistic support was the hired oil tanker Desh Deep flying the white ensign and suckling the fighting ships of the Eastern Fleet within the dangerous semi-circle of the battle sea. I think it is fair to say that never in the history of naval warfare had such a motley crowd of ships sallied forth to achieve a task whose success meant winning or losing the war. Having given them everything I had, I signalled the Fleet that evening, December 5, to the effect that strikes must be mounted with the utmost ferocity on Chittagong, Mongla, Chalna and Khulna. I told them: "I have a dead Pakistani, the Ghazi, lying at my feet. This is the time to do and dare. Go to it."

Before the eventful day ended I sent a signal to the fleet: From C-in-C (.) Motto for Eastern Fleet is—"Attack Attack Attack". Later that evening, the Defence Minister came on the line and spoke most encouragingly of the work done by Naval Forces. He asked me to pass on his congratulations, which I did. ■

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THE mud-slinging has not ceased even though it is all over between Zeenat and Sanjay Khan. The surprising thing is that more statements come from the Khan than from Ms Aman. So it's obvious who's maligning whom. Zeenat has her career to go back to but what about Sanjay? Unless he starts another film, people will lose what little respect they have for him. For a beginning, he should stop washing his dirty linen in public!

ONE is not likely to forget people one was close to in the past, especially if all was rosy then. I am talking of Shabana Azmi who speaks in such glowing terms about Shashi Kapoor. The two have decided to fall out with each other, for the sake of peace and to avoid rumours. He may have been her man in the past (recent past too) but she brings him into her conversation as often as



Shabana Azmi

she can and describes him as the strongest influence in her life. At the moment Shabana dotes on Shekhar Kapoor and this steady of hers is in no small terms

The Man in her life. But it's always the Man who could-have-been-but-couldn't who has this special charm and attraction for Shabana.

Rishi and Neetu: Will they live happily ever after?



OVERCONFIDENCE might spell trouble for Ranjeeta. She has signed more films than she can hope to start in the next five years. She confessed the other day that she doesn't even believe in counting how many film she has on hand. She goes to work with the rising sun and flops into bed, exhausted, late at night. But if she is not careful, slow starters like Kim and Poonam Dhillon who have great potential might well win the race since they are more careful and choosy. And then there is Jaya Prada too, a threat from the South. Her carelessness in picking and choosing her films is going to bring in trouble. One can only feel sorry for Ranjeeta because she is certainly the most talented and photogenic among the new lot.

SPEAKING of actresses, a few weeks ago Parveen Babi came back to Bombay, quietly. She is still not seeing many people, but some friends she was close to, insist that she met them. Most of the time, callers are told she has gone out, which may be the truth. It seems that Parveen is slowly getting down to work again. She had left a number of films incomplete when she quietly left Bombay. It is only a matter of time, says somebody close to her, when she gets back into the full swing of things. Meanwhile she avoids all publicity.

1980 might turn out to be the Year of Dilip Kumar though the only movie he acts in, Manoj Kumar's film Kranti — is likely to be released this year. But as the Sheriff of Bombay he will get a lot of attention from cameramen and journalists. And then again, the new heir (or rather the first heir) is rumoured to be coming around the early part of the year. So more glory is going to be accorded to the King of Tragedy.

NARGIS Dutt, a strong Indira Gandhi supporter, commented: "On the 6th, either I go to Delhi, or Europe depending on the results." Needless to say, she went to Delhi!

KHAAS BAAT

HER mother used to describe him as a family friend and daughter Shoba used to call him uncle. The public believed that Balu Mahendra, the award-winning cinematographer and director was the younger brother of Shoba's father and Balu Mahendra let that impression circulate. However, a fortnight back Tamil magazines and cinema-oriented dailies carried screaming headlines announcing the marriage of Balu and Shoba. Shoba's mother, Prema herself a well-known Malayalam film actress (now retired) was so shocked with the news that doctors had to be summoned. She was later put under medical care. "Balu is not my husband's younger brother". Prema told SUNDAY. "He went around telling everyone that he was and since he was a family friend, we didn't want to correct him". Balu, 36, has been married for more than 12 years and has a ten-year-old son. When the news of the "marriage" (it was perhaps an act of exchanging garlands) spread, Balu's wife

AK, frantically rushed to one of her Christian neighbours and asked them to pray for her. "He's a Christian", she said while sobbing. "God will hear your prayers. I cannot believe that he's married to Shoba. And if at all they decide to live together, pray so that I can get enough to carry on".

When all this melodrama was taking place. Shoba and Mahendra were shooting for a film, *Moodu Pani*, in Bangalore. Tamil film producers who have been taking notice of Shoba lately, thanks to films like *Pasi* were wondering whether she will insist on Balu Mahendra cranking the camera for all her forthcoming films. Well, there have been occasions when worried directors complained that Mahendra was interfering too much.

A few months ago SUNDAY had quoted director J. Mahendran complaining that Balu Mahendra was so obsessed with Shoba that he would lose interest in the film the

minute Shoba finished her work. Balu had photographed *Mulium Malarum* in which Shoba had played the heroine, and though J. Mahendran wanted to continue with the same team in his next film, he decided not to remembering the problems he had faced with *Mulium Malarum*. Shoba currently has nearly ten Tamil assignments including *Highway Queen*, a film to be directed by Durai whose *Pasi* is doing extremely well. Producers who may want Shoba but may not want Balu to crank the camera for them need not be worried because Balu is extremely cautious that the films he shoots turn out well visually. He doesn't care to shoot hurriedly especially after *Nellu's* success.

WHY didn't Rajkumar, Karnataka's most popular star, turn up at the Filmfest 1980 held at Bangalore? The grapevine has it that Rajkumar didn't want to be around because his "rival"

Vishnuvardhan had decided to attend the function.

However, it is also possible that Rajkumar was busy with the shooting of his prestigious film *Kaavayana* in Bombay.

His last film *Nanobba Kalla* in which he played dual roles did tame business. In its ten-week-long run,

it has grossed a paltry sum and Rajkumar is bent on consolidating his position.

BHAGYARAJ is an optimist. Even though he was very disappointing in *Suvar Illatha Chitrangal*, he is determined to daub his face with grease paint. There are many who wish that he would confine himself to writing stories and dialogue but he thinks otherwise. He will soon appear in a film being directed by Jayabharathi. *Kudisai*, Jayabharathi's maiden film, was a week-long disaster but for Jayabharathi the lure of the celluloid medium is so strong that he just cannot sit idle.

HEARD at a film party MGR was very fond of showing the victory sign; the two fingers. No doubt, because his Party got only two seats in the Parliamentary elections.

THOUGH *Aparachita* was quite a hit, Suresh Heblikar, the tall, rugged hero couldn't really make it big. After a long period of inactivity his *Yellindaro Bandaravu* directed by P. Lankesh is being screened all over Bangalore. Suresh has done reasonably well but whether this film will do his career any good or not is, still to be seen.

PIOUSJI

Shoba and Pratap Pothen in "Azhatha Kolangal"



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ARIES (March 21 — April 20) This week will prove to be a happy one and moderately fortunate, provided you check extravagant tendencies. A beneficial change of job or residence is not unlikely. Love and domestic affairs will now bring you more happiness. Promotion may be round the corner. Forge ahead on all fronts. **Good dates:** 3, 4, 5 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 9. **Favourable directions:** South and East.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) Apart from some opposition by an elderly partner or business associate, your prospects are excellent. A happy event is on the cards. You may also win a lottery. You will gain through secret information. Children and intellectuals will prove helpful. Push your affairs to the utmost. Make changes if desired. An old friend will come to your aid. **Good dates:** 5, 7 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 8. **Favourable directions:** West and South.



GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) Finances improve through adoption of ultra-modern ideas and business methods. Do not spend all your wealth on pleasure and friends. New romantic friendships will be formed and happiness will result. Keep your emotions under control and avoid sensationalism, concentrate on expansion of intellectual activities. This period is not lucky for courtship and marriage. Do not be hasty. **Good dates:** 4, 5, 7 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 2. **Favourable directions:** North and West.



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) Secret matters will progress and young people and intellectuals will contribute to your success and well-being. Valuable new friendships will be formed and beneficial changes and journeys are forecast. Many pleasant surprises are in store for you, especially in love, domestic and social matters. Expedite business deals and make changes. Health should be watched. **Good dates:** 3, 4, 6 and 7. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South-west.



LEO (July 23 — August 22) Progress may be slow and slightly disappointing. Your health requires a lot of attention, but a new friend will enter your life and contribute to success and happiness. Do not arouse the hostility of those in authority. The domestic front also requires your attention. Accidents and illness threaten you and your family. Elders in the family may cause some anxiety. **Good dates:** 5, 6, 7 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 10. **Favourable directions:** East and North.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Many beneficial changes are foreseen for you. Go confidently ahead with all your projects. Great success and happiness will surely result. This is an excellent period for you. Avoid quarrels with those in authority. Beware of deception and even treachery in business and love. **Good dates:** 3, 5, 6 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 7 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North-west.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) The beginning of the week will be marked by unexpected reverses and unpleasant changes. Do not take unnecessary risks in any field. You will achieve a fair amount of success but refrain from overoptimism and speculation. Though a sense of well-being and contentment prevails, a few disappointments on the financial front are predicted. Children and intellectuals will prove helpful. **Good dates:** 8, 7, 8 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable directions:** West and South.



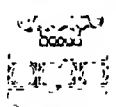
SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) Your financial position is good. You will have to travel to the South and South-west. You are very close to your cherished goal. There is no need to worry about pending suits and debts. Young friends and children contribute to your pleasure. Artistic pursuits will bring recognition. You will be able to solve all your domestic problems easily. **Good dates:** 3, 4, 8 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 9. **Favourable directions:** South and South-west.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) More than average success is indicated this week. You are very close to your cherished goal. The results of your recent efforts will prove fruitful. Your health will show improvement. Womenfolk will go in for new clothes and ornaments. Young friends and children will contribute to your happiness. A happy journey is also indicated. **Good dates:** 4, 5, 7 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** East.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Seek the advice of elders among the family. Do not enter into conflicts either with younger people or those in authority. Unexpected gain through inheritance or partnership ventures are indicated. While secret matters progress, novel and original ideas will lead to success in your business affairs. Letters will bring good news. Do not be extravagant. **Good dates:** 3, 6, 7 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 7 and 8. **Favourable direction:** North.



AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) You need plenty of rest to recover mentally. Trouble over property, inheritance and legal matters is indicated. Minor gains through an elderly male relative are likely. Choose your friends carefully and do not embark upon doubtful love adventures. A short journey is presaged. Keep your temper under control. You may meet an old friend who will prove helpful at this juncture. **Good dates:** 5, 6, 7 and 9. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 10. **Favourable direction:** South-east.



PISCES (February 20 — March 20) Your financial affairs will gradually prove less troublesome. For businessmen this is a period of strain. Do not go back on your word and handle your superiors with care and understanding. There is no need to worry about pending suits and debts. Children and womenfolk in the family may fall ill. **Good dates:** 4, 5, 6 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 9. **Favourable directions:** North and East.

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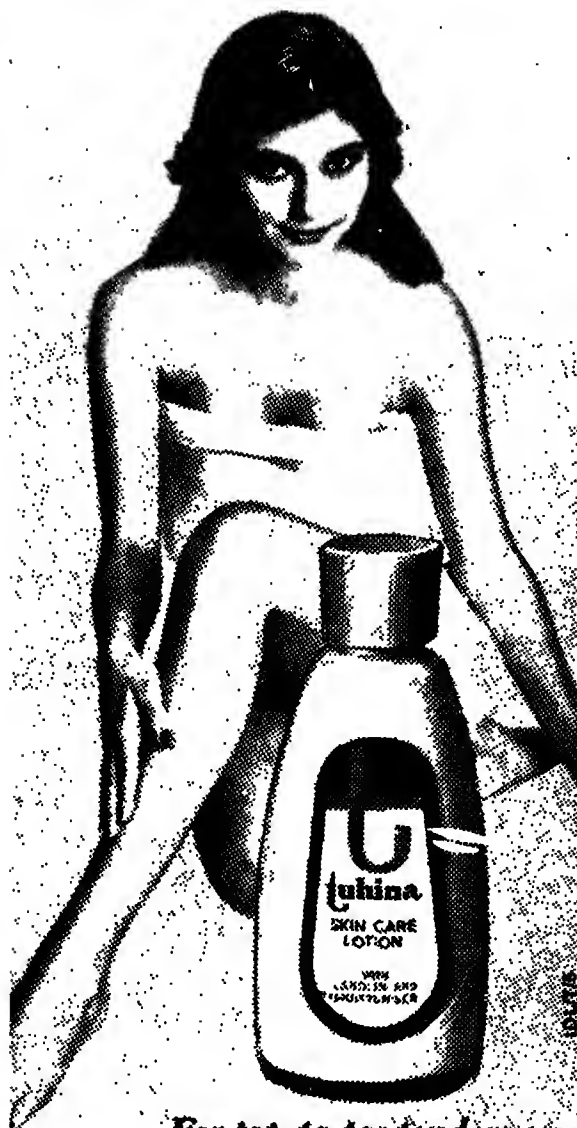
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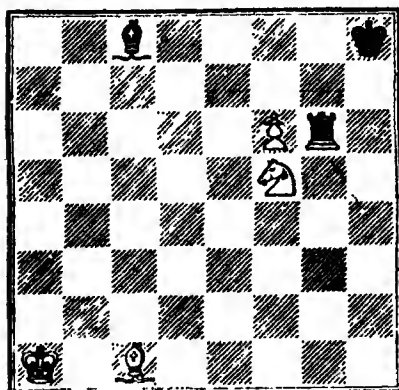


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chess

V. Korolkov (1st prize, Lelo 1961)



White to play and win (Solution at end of article)

The international front

AS YOU READ this article, the chances are that someone somewhere in the world is playing a very interesting game of chess, possibly one containing some new ideas. How then, the avid student may ask, can one keep in touch with these games? Quite recently two new English publications have come onto the market:

The New Chessplayer (Pitman, £4.95), a reincarnation of the late *Chessplayer*, gives between three and four hundred annotated games in each volume and produces three volumes each year. It is intended for international consumption and consequently the annotations are given using symbols. To augment the games collection there are theoretical articles which are quite good, though I would like to know who writes them (no indication is given). It helps to boost your confidence if you know you are playing Karpov's recommendation—even if it does lose by force. Strongly recommended for the 'professionals', but much too heavyweight for the occasional player.

In stark contrast, *International Chess* (Master Chess Publications) provides a much brighter and more readable picture of international tournament chess. A big colourful magazine, it is produced 12 times per year, though not necessarily monthly. The reason for the irregularity is that each issue features an extensive report (containing all the games) of a recent international tournament, and tournaments are not necessarily spread evenly throughout the year. Not all the attention is focused on games, however. There are many sketches and illustrations, a problem section, even a crossword, and the overall presentation is highly attractive. At an annual subscription rate of £12 per annum (or £1 50 per single issue) it is well worth trying. The problem in today's diagram is taken from John Nunn's excellent Problems and Puzzles column in the magazine. I leave John to lead you through the solution:

If White is to win the position he must do something about Black's threat to take the pawn. So his first move must be

1. P-B7 Black has little choice about the reply as 1... R-KB3 allows 2. B-N2 and 1... R-N1 loses to 2. P x R=Q+, K x Q; 3. N-K7+, so 1... R-QR3+ is forced. Now if 2. K-N2 Black can play... R-KB3 while 2. K-N1 allows the White knight to go with check, so White must sacrifice with 2. B-R3, R x B+; 3. K-N2, R-R7+ (3... R-N6+; 4. K-R2 stops the checks and

wins) leaving White with the problem of avoiding the checks from the black rook. One idea is to run up the board with the king, but after 4. K-B3, R-QB7+; 5. K-N4, R-QN7+; 6. K-B5, R-QB7+; 7. K-N6 (or Q6), R-QN7+ (or Q7+); White cannot advance to the seventh rank owing to R-QN2+ (or Q2+) taking the pawn. So a better plan is to go over to the kingside and shelter behind the knight after 4. K-B1, R-R6+ (4... R-QB7+; 5. K-Q1)

5. K-Q2, R-R7+; 6. K-K3, R-R6+; 7. K-B4, R-R5+; 8. K-N5, but Black still continues the fight with 8... R-KN5+, so that if 9. K x R, B x N+, 10. K x B, K-N2 draws. Also 9. K-R5, R-KN1 or 9. K-B6, R-KN1; 10. N-K7, R-Q1 lead nowhere. The right idea is 9. K-R6! R-KN1 (9... R-KN3+, 10. K x R, B x P+; 11. K-R6) 10. N-K7 forcing 10... B-K3, when 11. P x R=Q+, B x Q; 12. N-N6 mate finishes Black off. An unexpected developed from the original position!

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

THE DEAL below occurred in a goulash, but the play was logical. Observe the diamond combination in the North-South hands. The defence made no mistake, yet the declarer lost no diamond trick in his contract of Six Spades

Dealer, South. Game all.

♠ Q J 7 8 5
♥ Q J 2
♦ A 7 6 5 4
♣ —

♠ 8 3
♥ AK10987643 W E
♦ —
♣ Q 2

♠ AK10942
♥ —
♦ Q 9 3 2
♣ A 7 6

The bidding was brief:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♠	4♥	6♠	No
No	No		

South was Daniel Versini, a top French player who now plays little competition bridge, preferring the excitement of rubber bridge with numerous goulashes (unshuffled hands dealt in irregular fashion, leading to freakish distribution).

West led a trump, on which East discarded a club. South ruffed a heart, cashed Ace of clubs and ruffed a club, drew the second trump, then ruffed a heart and a club, arriving at this position:

♠ 7
♥ Q
♦ A 7 6 5
♣ —

♠ —
♥ AK10987 W E
♦ —
♣ —

♠ A 10
♥ —
♦ Q 9 3 2
♣ —

Possessing an exact count, South led a low diamond from dummy. Clearly, it would not help East to go up with the King, as he would have no safe exit. He put in the 10 and the Queen won. Now declarer crossed to the Ace of diamonds and led a heart from dummy, discarding one of his two remaining diamonds. West won and was forced to concede a ruff-and-discard.

Terence Reese's latest book, *The Most Puzzling Situations in Bridge Play* (Allen and Unwin, £4.50), consists of problems on particular themes.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



ALTHOUGH Newfoundland ceased to issue its own stamps 30 years ago, when it became a member of the Canadian confederation, its previous stamps are still very popular. The first pictorial series was issued in 1865, when Newfoundland changed from sterling to the Canadian currency of dollars and cents. One stamp featured a codfish, another a seal on an ice-floe and a third a topsail schooner at sea. The series also contained one of the few stamps portraying the Prince Consort, a 10-cents printed in black, for he had died four years earlier. This mint example realised £125 in a recent Warwick & Warwick sale. As the imprint at the side shows, the 1865 series was printed by the American Bank Note Co., New York. Among the royal portraits on later Newfoundland issues are those of Queen Alexandra, Queen Mary and the latter's youngest child, Prince John, who died in 1919 aged 13.

C.W. HILL

quiz

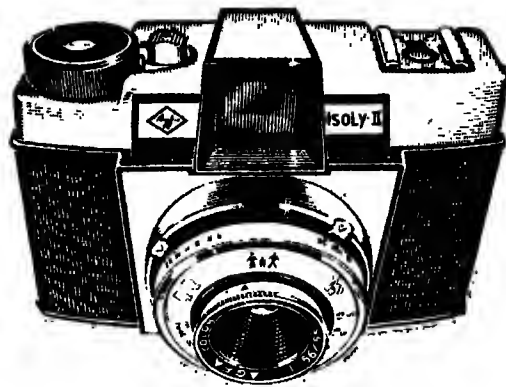
QUESTIONS

1. When did the label 'The Left' come in use?
2. In ecology, what is climax?
3. What does CND stand for?
4. What is Acmeism?
5. What is Asepsis?

?

1. The label came into being as a metaphorical extension of the seat-plan of the French Estates General in 1789 where the nobility sat on the king's right and the Third Estate on his left.
2. A final or culminating state of an undisturbed vegetational community.
3. Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, a British organisation formed in February 1958.
4. A movement of Russian poetry which grew out of symbolism.
5. The procedure by which wound infections are prevented from occurring by use of sterile instruments.

ANSWERS



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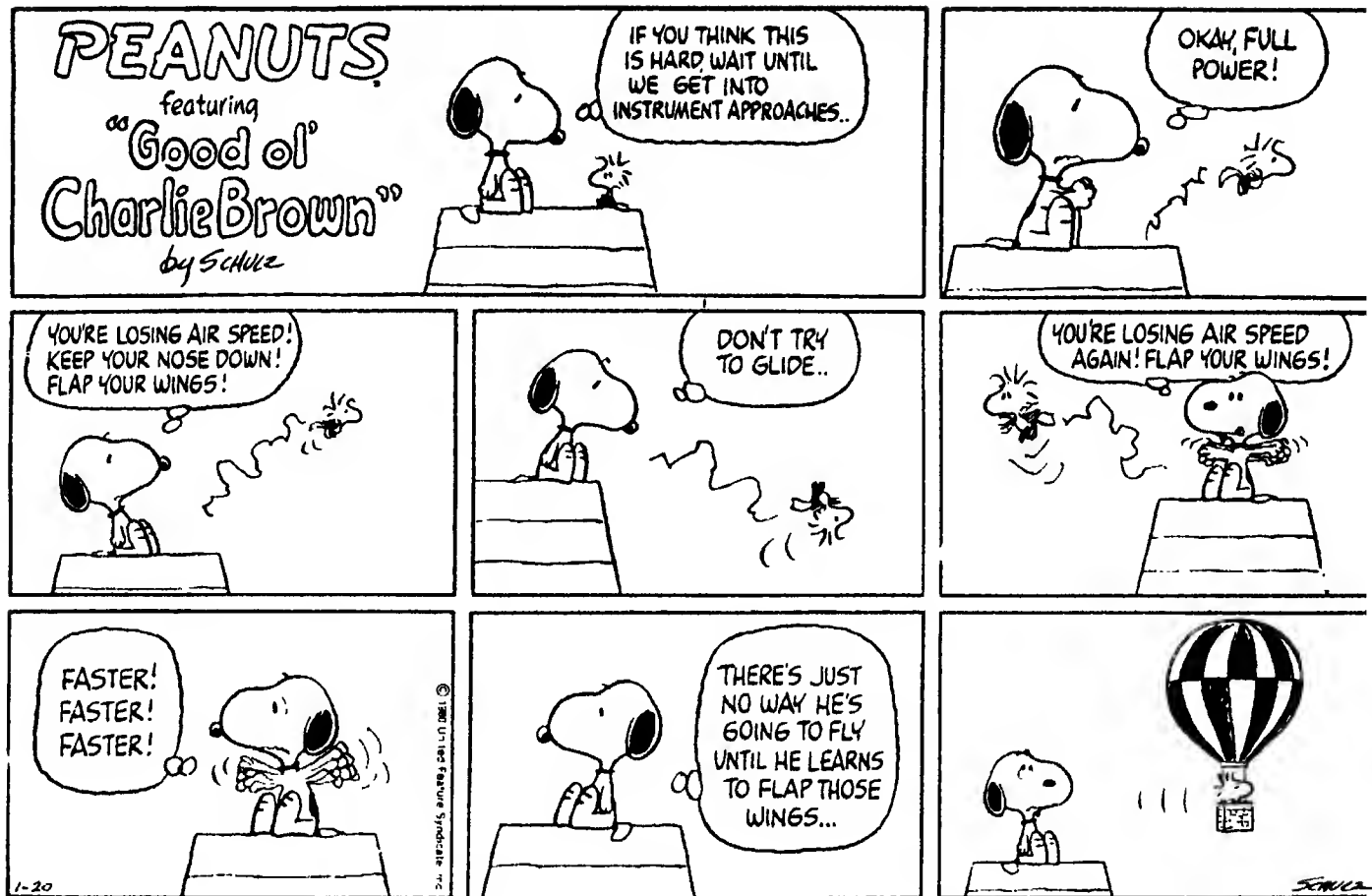
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AGRA : Mr S. K. Agnihotri, Additional Sessions Judge, was beaten up by a large number of people, including lawyers, inside his court room on January 24. According to a report lodged with the police by the judge, a number of lawyers and others shouted slogans against him and then entered the court room and assaulted him. The District Bar Association, however, alleged that the judge had been beaten up following his acceptance of a bribe to convict four people, including a lawyer, in a dacoity case. The incident occurred after the Bar Association passed a resolution condemning the "corrupt behaviour of the judge over a long period" — *The Statesman* (Manjira Majumdar, Calcutta)

HISSAR : Two young women who exercised their franchise in favour of a certain candidate in the recent Lok Sabha elections against the wishes of their husbands are now being harassed by them. The fathers of the two women have approached the police authorities to "save" their daughters from harassment at the hands of their respective in-laws and husbands — *The Hindu* (T. Srinivas Reddy, Hyderabad)

NEW DELHI : The workers of the Central Engineering Workshops of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in Bombay recently staged a

unique protest demanding more work, according to the BARC Officers' Association. The association said the workers were upset over the fact that the jobs that were hitherto done at the Central Workshops were now being awarded to private contractors. The workers wanted to know "whose interests the authorities were serving by keeping their own workers and machines idle and at the same time paying the private contractors large sums of money for their jobs", the Association said — *Deccan Herald* (Shreekanth, Mysore)

TIRUCHI : For the first time in the history of jails in Tamil Nadu a life convict will become a student of the Madras Medical College shortly. C. N. Sundaram (25), a native of Orathanad in Thanjavur district, who was a pre-final student of the Thanjavur Medical College in 1974 was convicted to life imprisonment by the District and Sessions Court, Thanjavur, for murder. Since then he has been lodged in the central prison here. Sundaram appealed to the Tamil Nadu Government that he should be allowed to continue his medical studies. The Government has now acceded to the request of Sundaram and arrangements are being made for the continuation of his studies at Madras Medical College. He would be escorted daily from the Madras Central Jail to his class room — *The Indian Express* (Syed Muthahar Saqaf, Killai)

KUMBAKONAM : The body of an old Harijan woman was cremated in a cremation yard, belonging to caste Hindus in Koopachakottai village near here. Caste Hindus also took part in the funeral procession. In an effort to eradicate untouchability the caste Hindus had decided to allow Harijans to use their cremation yard. The Harijans there have no cremation yard which is easily accessible by road — *Deccan Herald* (P. Sripathi Rao, Udipi)

dia abroad

WASHINGTON : A small community of 250 Sikhs settled in Zahedan, Iran are doing well despite trouble there between the Centre and the State and Shias and Sunnis. The Sikhs are businessmen and stick strictly to business. The province the Washington Post reported from Zahedan is heavily populated by Baluchi Sunnis and Shite Sistanis. The Sikhs are a protected minority. They give alms to the needy and get along well with the people. They used to loan money before the revolution outlawed "usury." When Khomeini banned alcohol, the authorities did not want Sikh wine

shops to suffer. So they gave them first five days and then an additional ten days to dispose of existing stock. The Post said that although some young Sikhs leave Zahedan for India and Europe, others are content to make it their permanent home. Eighteen-year-old Ranjit Singh said: "It is no different from living in a small village in India. Everybody knows everybody else and I have plenty of opportunities in business here." Mahendra Singh Sanny (65) regarded the wealthiest man in Zahedan said: "We are businessmen, not political men". — *The Sunday Standard*

SANJAY is Mrs Gandhi's gift to the opposition—Jagjivan Ram

GIVE him (Sanjay) a job to do and he will do it, even if he has to not eat, sleep or anything. He is a person who is very efficient. His hobbies are flying or making models or things like that—Mrs Indira Gandhi

IT is as disastrous for India as it was for Germany when they voted Hitler to power in 1932. Hitler also had the same slogan: Stable Government and order as against anarchy ... The choice they (the electorate) made is a national suicide—Utpal Dutt, Bengali theatre personality and film actor

I HAVE been leading an idle life all these twenty-eight months. By his non-performance initially Morarji Desai sent me to sleep, and worse followed when Charan Singh anaesthetised. Now I have just woken up—G. D. Birla in *India Today*

MY opinions about her (Mrs Gandhi) and her son have not changed: they are for keeps. The fact that she has won a two-thirds majority does not change what I said and felt—George Fernandes

THERE are too many seducible people in the Congress (I) — Pilloo Mody in the Lok Sabha

IN that (Janata) cabinet, every minister was a Prime Minister. And the Prime Minister himself did not know what was happening — Indira Gandhi quoted in *Newsweek*

OUR country's future lies with the Communists. I am sure that in a month she (Mrs Gandhi) will regret her victory — I. S. Johar

MOSCOW wants to outflank and encircle Europe and isolate America. Later on, it will destroy Europe also—Chinese Foreign Minister, Huang Hua

WITH India we will have the closest of relations, and with China the friendliest of relations — B. P. Koirala in *Onlooker*

I AM getting old and the time has now come to take my last bow — Asif Iqbal

I THINK that instead of the USA and Britain coming out so strongly with words by saying they were behind the Shah, they supported him in this and that, if they had just kept quiet from the beginning and not mixed into our affairs, that could have been probably the best thing—The exiled Shah



Raghu Rai

and Janata Party will promptly combine against the Congress and at present the Lok Dal's peasant base is still intact. In case these Parties are left on their own for a few more weeks, the contradictions between the Janata Party and Lok Dal, and their internal problems will sharpen.

SAFE AND SOUND

NOW that Mr P. S. Bhinder is the Police Commissioner of Delhi one wonders what would be the fate of many police officers who decried Mr Bhinder and Mr Sanjay Gandhi in the 33 months of Janata and Lok Dal rule. To the layman the most obvious name in this category is that of Mr P. R. S. Brar, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Delhi district, who supervised the lathi charge on the demonstration led by Sanjay Gandhi on Delhi's Janpath on May 1, 1979. The reason for believing that Mr Brar is in trouble is that a photograph of the lathi charge, which was published by a local English daily, showed Sanjay Gandhi lying on the ground, a policeman beating him up with a lathi and Mr Brar looking harassed and bending down and pointing a finger at Sanjay. The logical conclusion is that Mr Brar was telling the policeman to beat up Sanjay. But the truth is different, and therefore, Mr Brar is perhaps one of the safest officers today. According to one Congress (I) eyewitness, what exactly happened on May 1 was this. When Youth Congress demonstrators turned violent, Mr Brar with folded hands told Sanjay, "Sir, please come to the van." But in the meantime, one of the demonstrators came forward, pushed and abused Mr Brar and a tussle ensued after which Mr Brar ordered a lathi charge. When Sanjay Gandhi fell to the ground, Mr Brar pointed a finger and said, "Quickly arrest him, quickly arrest him," obviously trying to save him from the lathi charge.

TAILPIECE: The Union Home Minister, Giani Zail Singh, told police officers at FICCI auditorium on January 19: *Desh ka halat tabhi kharab hoti hai jab desh ka jhanda jhuk jaye ya police ka danda toot jaye.* (The country's condition deteriorates only when either the national flag droops or the policemen's batons break.)

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

RELEGATED

THE Congress high command (it is no longer necessary to add an I because Mr Urs himself has admitted that the Party of Mrs Indira Gandhi is the real Congress) has taken a top-level decision regarding regional Parties from Sikkim and north-eastern India. Now the Congress will not accept a merger with these Parties, but will treat them as ad hoc members of the working committee because their loyalties have repeatedly proved to be fickle. While taking this decision the Congress high command had particularly Sikkim in mind.

So far as the dissolution of

Opposition-led State Assemblies is concerned, the Congress high command is in two minds. The Party leaders' main hitch is over UP and Bihar. There are two schools of thought regarding these States. One group represented by Mr Sanjay Gandhi is for the immediate dissolution of the State Assemblies. They argue that if the Janata Party and Lok Dal get more time they can chalk out a new and effective strategy for survival. At the moment they are confused and battered. Thus they can be caught unprepared. But the senior group of the Party wants to wait a little more. The logic advanced by these leaders is: If the Assemblies are immediately dissolved the Lok Dal

13 January 1979

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16 February 1979

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9 December 1978

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(This is a true-life incident. But, for obvious reasons the actual names have been concealed)

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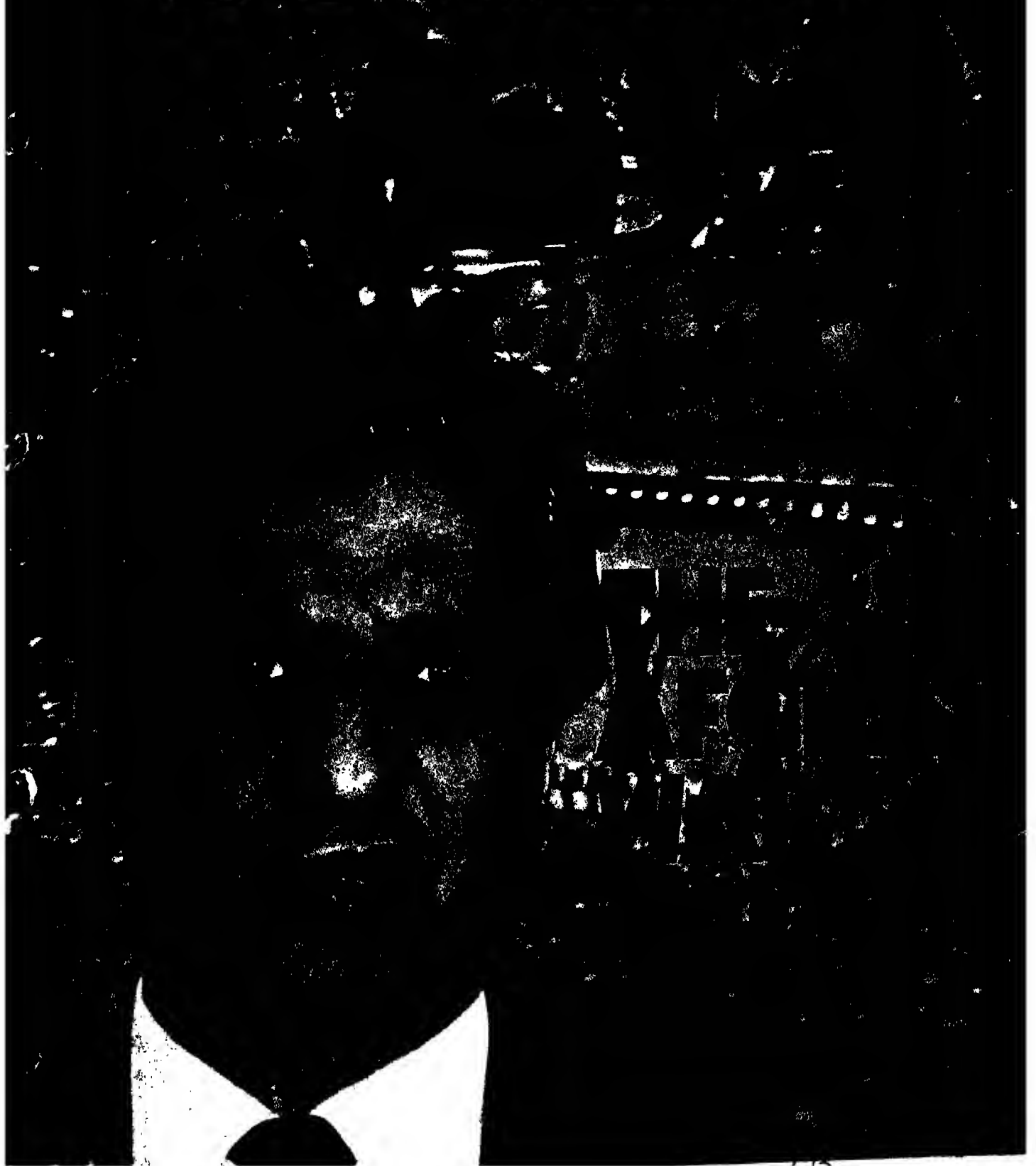


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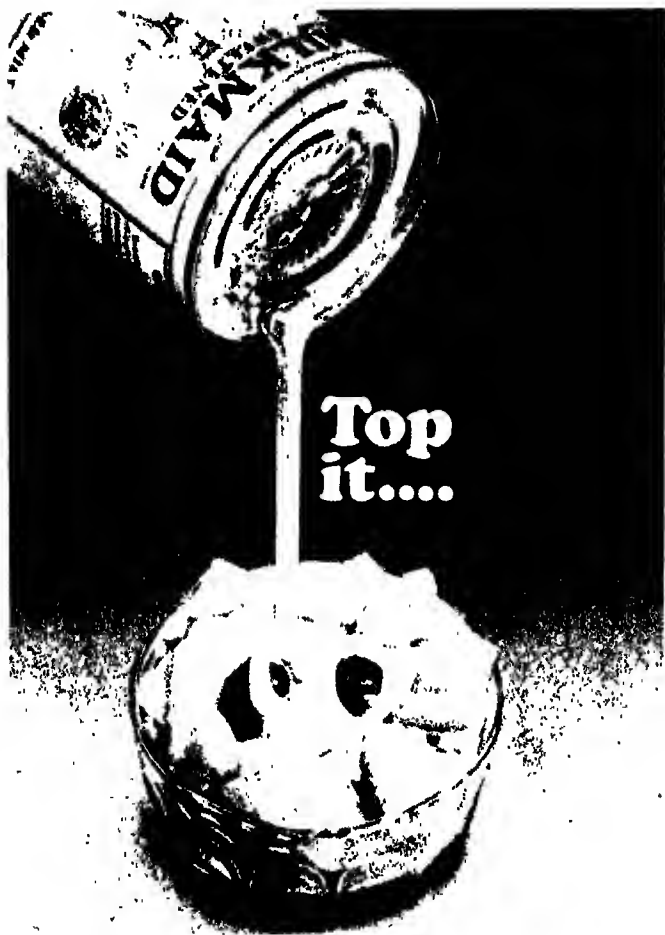


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Is Mrs Gandhi turning vindictive? This is the fear in the minds of many who have followed the drama of N. K. Singh's "arrest". How did the Haryana police take away the investigator of the Kissa Kursi Ka case and what did Parliament have to say on it? A detailed report.



How does a cricketer keep body and soul together when his playing days are over? A fascinating study of various firms that employ cricketers on their staff. Also a moving account of Pakistani skipper Asif Iqbal's last Test innings at the Eden Gardens and the fun and frolic at the Telarama single-wicket tamasha.

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OTHER DEPARTMENTS

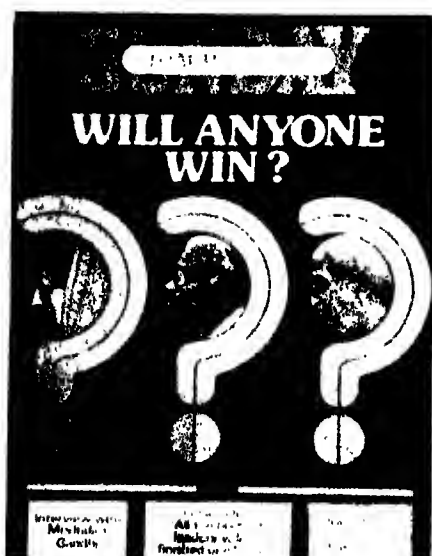
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Late, but great

YOUR special election issue (December 30) was an interesting one — full of thought-provoking articles, lucid interviews and interesting sidelights. M. J. Akbar's cover story, "Will anyone win?" was the best of the lot since it was comprehensive. After going through Mrs Gandhi's interview, I noticed her tendency of avoiding questions.

The timing of the issue, however, was not apt as two of your predictions were wrong. The Congress(I) bagged six out of the seven seats in Delhi contrary to your report that no Party would sweep the polls there. Again your prediction that the Lok Dal would be a force to reckon with in Rae Bareilly and Amethi proved to be wrong. One last complaint: Why did you leave out the humble Asterix? He is indispensable.

Soutik Biswas, Calcutta.

IN RETROSPECT, your special election issue makes it clear that unless the right questions are asked and spontaneous answers are elicited from the common people, no opinion poll is likely to help. The analysis of ivory tower intellectuals will remain wishful thinking.

K. E. Seshadri, Madras.

M. J. AKBAR's analysis on the prospects of the mid-term poll was good. The results of the election have clearly proved that the factors he had mentioned in his article about the disadvantages Mrs Gandhi faced with regard to her comeback did not matter much. The people gave their verdict in her favour in the hope that a strong and stable Government would be formed under her stewardship. She should honour their verdict to fulfil the dreams of the people.

P. Ghosh, Calcutta.

THE cover story, "Will anyone win?" was an impartial assessment of the trends on the eve of the election. The voter was really in a dilemma when it came to a choice between the three Parties. The irony of it is that no Party is capable of removing corruption and poverty from the country.

Sreekanth, Mysore.

I RECEIVED the special issue (December 30) on January 8, 1980, when the Congress(I) was heading for a two-thirds majority. Although there was no interest left in that issue I went through it. I was taken aback to find how correctly you predicted the outcome of the election. Your publication of the opinion poll of Bihar and UP was equally very significant. Almost every newspaper and journal was of the view that no single Party would be in a position to form a Government and that a coalition Government was inevitable. You alone were able to visualise the

outcome of the election. Congratulations!

Shahzad Alam, Chapra.

AS A regular reader of SUNDAY, I would like to bring to your notice that I received the December 30 issue on January 9. How meaningless it was to read about the election prospects after the results were out.

Bharat Toprani, Bombay.

THE special election issue was educative although it is difficult to educate millions of people in India. Consider the following facts: The Congress failed the country even though it had ample chances to improve the general condition of the people.

The fate of the great nation is now tottering. The educated youth have to rise to the challenge and the intelligentsia has to guide and help them. A new political force has to emerge to take over and re-build.

M. Prabhu, Bangalore.

Whose knees?

DAVID SELBOURNE's commentary "India on its knees" (December 30) was worth reading. I do not come across such realistic writing very often. I do not think that the elections in India are any proof of the success of democracy in this country. Democracy is a system of multiple alternatives and rational choice. If the choice is determined by emotion rather than reason then the value of democratic system is lost. Such a decision may even lend legitimacy to personal and arbitrary rule which democracy is meant to prevent. A sweeping

victory in an election, which is brought by a wave of emotion makes good news but not necessarily, a good Government. Images play an important part in elections. A political leader with a favourable image can work wonders with the electorate, and even Parties have ridden popularity waves, thus helping incompetents to become elected MPs. This happened in 1977 and also in 1980. Surely, this is no sign of the wisdom of the electorate.

Sunil Sondhi, New Delhi.

IT IS not India that is on its knees but India's English Press which is at the feet of foreign scribblers.

G. T. Sastri, Kodaikanal.

Dirty politics

CONGRATULATIONS to M. J. Akbar for asking the most relevant question to Mrs Indira Gandhi, "Mr Charan Singh is the one who has done most to encourage the caste feeling" (December 30) about the relevance of encouraging people like the Shahi Imam in politics. The top leaders of all the Parties left no stone unturned to pull him to their side.

A. Venkata Krishna Rao, Hyderabad.

IN the interview, Mrs Gandhi has said that Sanjay was contesting the election to defend himself and to prove that he was not what he was made out to be in the last two years by the Press and the Janata leaders. Is it proper that a man who is being tried for an offence be acquitted if he happens to be elected to the Lok Sabha?

Virendra Kumar, Ghaziabad.

Stepchild

THIS is in reference to Swarup Jena's article, "Biju Patnaik is far ahead" (December 30). Throughout his political career Mr Patnaik has nurtured his constituency. Kendrapara, like a stepchild. He has thereby neglected the other parts of underdeveloped Orissa.

P. G. Deb, Bombay.

Short-sighted godman

WHEN students of politics or political analysts make political assessments that finally turn out wrong, they can be forgiven because of their limitations. But when a godman like Jai Gurudev forecasts about politics and politicians, "All the present leaders will be finished one by one" (December 30), one cannot help questioning his divine power. He should retire.

Y. S. Singh, Nagaland.

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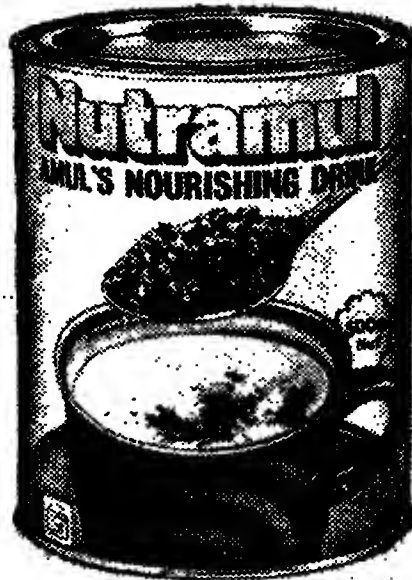
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Inaccurate ?

THE report, "Strike in Calcutta daily" by Tirthankar Ghosh (January 27) not only contains a number of inaccurate statements, but betrays an utter lack of understanding of a newspaper's working. This is bound to mislead the public if allowed to pass uncontradicted. Can anyone claiming even an elementary knowledge of a newspaper's working say that the "chief sub-editor is the only member of the editorial department in a newspaper office who has to have a thorough knowledge of all news items, big or small"? It is well known that the entire editorial staff, including reporters, sub-editors and chief sub-editors have to cooperate and work as a well-knit team under the guidance of the news editor, who, in turn, gets directions from the editor. How then can a chief sub-editor alone be the sole and final judge of the selection and display of news?

The news editor is in charge of the news room. He is in constant touch with the news and its sources, even on Sundays and holidays, and advises the chief sub-editor on duty not only during the daytime but also at night to ensure proper coverage of all important news. It is the news editor who organises pictures, even on holidays. He leaves instructions, written or verbal, for the chief sub-editor and others on duty to see that adequate coverage of all important developments is done. Your correspondent is entirely wrong in suggesting that the news editor's role is simply to conduct a post-mortem after the paper has been produced. The first job of the news editor is to avoid all avoidable pitfalls in gathering, selecting and displaying news. Post mortems are part of the work, no doubt. To be wise after the event does not

benefit the paper.

Our paper of July 24, 1978 missed several important news items, the most important being the story of the US impounding of Indian garments equivalent to 14 million square yards and India losing crores of rupees in the process, as well as the new DAVP ad policy announcement despite specific instructions to carry them. Our competitors as well as our own Delhi and Bombay editions carried them prominently on the front page. Is this "better judgement"? It is here that the news editor, who is a more senior working journalist, steps in to correct the obvious lack of judgement on the part of the chief sub-editor. The editor was fully aware of the circumstances leading to the enquiry initiated against the sub-editor. It may be added that the editor himself had instructed the sub that he should abide by the discipline of the office and participate in the domestic enquiry, which he had done.

The correspondent has not even cared to check his facts before rushing to print. The chairman of Bennett, Coleman and Company is Mr A. K. Jain and not the late Mr S P Jain, former chairman and father of the present chairman. His reference to 4,000 families is misleading since the total strength of the Calcutta office is below 300.

B. M. Sahai, News Editor, The Economic Times, Calcutta.

Tirthankar Ghosh replies: I regret the two factual errors which Mr Sahai has kindly corrected. But on the basic issue at stake he has quoted only a portion of a sentence of mine, leaving out the crucial qualifying phrase "during his spell of duty". And nowhere have I emphasised that producing a newspaper was not a team effort.

False promises

THIS is in reference to Nirmal Mitra's "Mini transmitter in the Golden Temple", (December 9). The purpose of installation is far more serious. The Sikhs demand an autonomous Sikh State. They feel they have been betrayed. The historical and political background of their aspiration is this. Way back, in the year 1929, during a session of the Indian National Congress at Lahore both Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru gave a solemn assurance to the veteran Sikh leader, Baba Kharrak, that after the country became independent, no Constitution could be framed by the majority community unless it was freely acceptable to the Sikhs. This promise was committed later to a policy resolution which continued to be repeatedly reiterated till August 1947 by the Hindu Congress leaders.

However, after Independence, the Congress Hindu leaders made a complete volte face, forgetting all their assurances and promises given to the

Sikhs. And it became obvious that the sole motive behind these assurances was just to keep the Sikhs under their thumb and not to let them emerge as an independent third force or to let them join hands with the Muslim minority. Seeing all this and to give expression to their disenchantment, the Sikh representatives declined to append their signatures to the Constituent Act in 1950 as a token of their clear and irrevocable rejection.

Even the just and legitimate demand for a Punjabi-speaking State on the accepted linguistic principle was long denied to the Sikhs. The history of the late Fifties and Sixties bears ample witness to what enormous sacrifices the Sikhs had to make for which they had suffered so much and in return asked for so little. It is a bitter tale how, with the connivance of senior Hindu leaders at the Centre, the Arya Samajists aided by the Jana Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha opposed this just demand. It is a fact of history that nothing has ever been given to the Sikhs without a struggle. This is the sad truth. A. Singh, Calcutta.

No turncoat, this

"TURNCOAT journalists" by Mohd. Yunus (November 11) was an excellent piece exposing the imbecility, shameless opportunism and professional bankruptcy of top Indian journalists. However, the tail-piece on Chalapathi Rau (MC) of the National Herald came as an anticlimax. Anyone familiar with Mr Rau's illustrious career as a journalist would wonder how the epithet 'turncoat' fits in his record. He has been a model of consistency in all respects—his loyalty to the Herald which he served for over three decades, his unflinching faith in socialism and the public sector, his loyalty to the ideals of Nehru and his abiding concern for the underdog and the downtrodden—all these have been with him always. The reflections on Mr Rau's professional competence are perverse and betray a prejudiced mind. His readers will remember for a long time his incisive, objective and visionary editorials. While admitting the success of the Lucknow edition of the Herald, Mohd Yunus forgets that this edition was nurtured by none other than Mr Rau himself in the face of stiff competition from established newspapers like The Pioneer and The Leader. Mr Yunus should know that to succeed in commercial terms a newspaper needs more of business support than editorial brilliance. And MC was never a Mammon worshipper! Was it not Indira Gandhi (when she was Prime Minister) who said that if, for nothing else, the National Herald should live on as a mouthpiece of MC!

A. Kumar, Gwalior.

Fun with numbers

THE nature of my job as an accountant is compilation and calculation of accounts. As a result my mind is preoccupied with figures. One day my attention was diverted to the newly placed 1980 calendar. Just out of curiosity I added the digits in the dates with the digits of 1980 and found some interesting results. Here is a sample of what I found: If the digits of a date are added with the total of the digits of 1980 the result will always be identical. Take the date 23 and add the two digits $2+3=5$. Then add 5 with the total of the four digits of 1980 i.e. $1+9+8+0=18$ which is $1+8=9$. Now add 5 and 9. The result is 14 which is identical with the net result of the date i.e. 23.

In the same way:
Date—8. Year—1980 ($1+9+8+0$) = 18, ($1+8$) = 9 (static). Then $8+9=17$, ($1+7$) = 8 ii) Date—15 ($1+5$) = 6. Then $6+9=15$, ($1+5$) = 6. iii) 31 ($3+1$) = 4. Then $4+9=13$, ($1+3$) = 4.

I am not a numerologist but isn't it interesting?

Amalendu Ghosh, New Delhi.

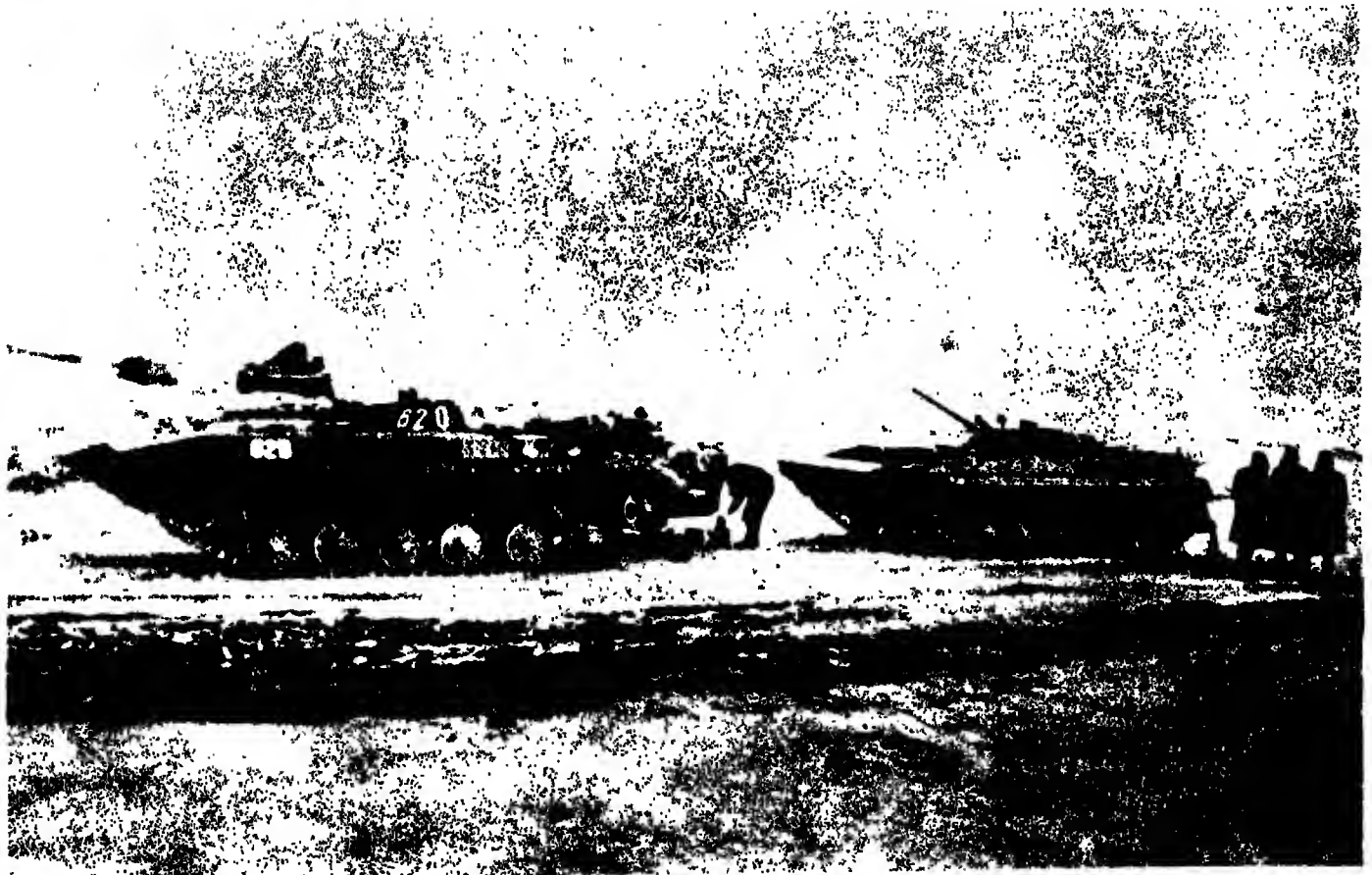


AFGHAN WAR

By
VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT

THE intrusion of foreign troops in any country is a messy business. It does no credit to the country where the troops come nor to the country from where they arrive. The presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan is not a reflection of strength either of the Afghan revolutionaries or of the Soviet position. Obviously, it was only the most sombre considerations of state security that must have compelled the Soviets to swallow the bitter pill and invite world-wide criticism by sending their troops into Kabul. An early withdrawal of Soviet troops, subject to certain well-defined conditions, has to be on the Indian agenda for a variety of reasons. But the question for India is not a simplistic one of condemning foreign intervention but one of analysing the background, the sequence of events, the regional developments, the strategic calculations, the global scene and the stakes for this country in the escalating situation there.

It would have been the easiest course, if it had been possible, to join the chorus of denunciation and take what on the face of it would appear to be a straight moral stand, as some leaders in the opposition think they are doing, that the presence of foreign troops must be condemned and a demand made for their immediate, unconditional withdrawal. But then this would be turning a blind eye towards our



own experience in Bangladesh, the turn of events in Kampuchea, the series of developments in Afghanistan, the role of Pakistan and the implications for the security and vital national interest of this country of the US-Chinese strategy in South and South-East Asia and in the Gulf region. To take off only from the point where the Soviet troops swept into Kabul would be both unhistorical and naive. It would amount to a crass ignorance of what was afoot around the borders of India.

One can begin with the Afghan revolution to understand some of the subsequent action and reaction, although this is not the place for any detailed discussion of the internal situation there. Clearly, forces of modernization and radical reform had been gaining ground in Afghanistan in the last decade or so and were locked in increasingly violent conflict with representatives of the status quo and religious orthodoxy. Every student of history knows that revolution in a feudal, religious society is an extremely tortuous and complex phenomenon. In the conditions of Afghanistan it pitted a rising radical group against the landlords and mullahs whose interests converged to prevent the distribution of land on the one hand and erosion of the authority of the representatives of religion on the other.

The coup d'etat of Daoud in July 1973 and the overthrow of the monarchy was the first link in this chain of events leading to sharper and sharper confrontation between reform and restoration. The big landlords were up in arms and so were the mullahs who saw their century-old dominance threatened with extinguishment. It was not difficult to fan the flames of resistance against the radicals in the name of religion and orthodoxy and preservation of the country's traditions and customs.

Unfortunately, for the Afghan revolution it did not have a strong and stable organization, steered in struggle and tempered in the fire of revolution to mobilize, activate and throw into action large masses of people in defence of their revolutionary rights. As often happens where the base of the revolutionary elite is somewhat limited, the revolutionary movement gets afflicted and overlaid by power struggles within the elite, providing ample opportunities to the conservative and reactionary elements to gather support and stultify the revolution. Those who gain ascendancy tend to take recourse to extreme measures, suppress their rivals, show increasing intolerance towards their opponents and consequently further narrow their base of support.

This is precisely what happened in Afghanistan, first with Daoud himself, then after his ouster with the struggle between the Parcham and Khalq, and then within the Khalq itself, finally culminating in a new somewhat uneasy Parcham-Khalq combination and the entry of Soviet troops. But a real foreign intervention had taken place during the

period of this sharp struggle among not only many members of the elite leading the Afghan revolutionary movement, but also between their forces and those of the feudal landlords and the mullahs who organised armed resistance to the Kabul regime and the radical reform measures. It should not be overlooked that the revolutionary movement had gained strength in Afghanistan and that the ouster of Daoud came about when in the wake of the murder of a well-known Leftist intellectual, the streets of Kabul were swept by thousands of mourners who marched past the US embassy shouting anti-American slogans. That was on April 17, 1978.

It was during this period of an increasingly violent struggle that Pakistan became a sanctuary for the rebel forces to flee into its territory for protection, sustenance, recouping and replenishment of arms. As the struggle with the rebels became sharper and as it got entangled in a stultifying power struggle in Kabul which led to the adoption of more and more illiberal and extreme measures alienating popular support, the role of the Pakistani sanctuary became more crucial. Obviously, Pakistan was not alone in providing succour and arms to the rebels who could freely move in and out from the border with Afghanistan. The United States and China were co-ordinating their strategy along with Pakistan in getting the revolutionary regime in Kabul overthrown.

The strategy had been worked out with an eye towards the entire Gulf region. If a conservative mullah-dominated regime could be installed in Kabul, it would not only be a pro-Pakistani regime, but could be instrumental in playing an important role in implementing US objectives and strengthening the American position in the Gulf. It could be utilised to restrain and contain the Soviets and to pressurise the anti-Western forces in this region.

The developments in Iran actually made this denouement in Kabul even more attractive and crucial. For Pakistan the prize was, of course, to have for the first time in Kabul a captive Government beholden to it and, therefore, resolving, for the time being at least, its problems with the Pakhtoons and the Baluchis and other border people. But for Washington and Beijing the stakes were much higher and a US-China-Pak combination with its overlordship in Afghanistan could decisively influence events in the strategic, sensitive Gulf area. The ouster of the Shah and the upsurge against the American-supported rulers of Iran reinforced the perceived need for such a policy.

There were two options open in regard to Teheran and both could be tried simultaneously. A deal could be struck with the so-called Muslim fundamentalists ruling Iran in the name of saving Islam from Soviet communism or the dominance in Afghanistan could be the spearhead for pressurizing the new forces in

Iran. Either way the conservative and mullah-dominated restoration in Afghanistan would provide powerful levers in the hands of the Washington-Beijing-Islamabad combination.

It hardly needs to be pointed out that Afghanistan is at the doorsteps of the Soviet Union and that the installation of a pro-Western regime there would immediately change the historic strategic balance in this region. Such a regime dependent totally on Western material support and arms would on the one hand provide a new gambit on the borders of the Soviet Union and on the other be of immense value in any emergent situation in West Asia.

There is no secret history. The American and British newspapers have carried enough stories of rebel resistance watched from the Pakistani border and the free hit-and-run movement between Pakistan territory and the Afghan border to leave room for any speculation. An early dispatch, for instance, of a *New York Times* correspondent from a "base in Pakistan" in February last year left no doubt that Pakistani territory harboured bases for the rebel forces in Afghanistan. A subsequent report from Peshawar by Robert Trumbull, in the *New York Times* of June 25 revealed that "guerrilla bands slip into Afghanistan from the camps in Pakistan, which are strung along the Afghan frontier from Chitral, a former princely state in the north, to the province of Baluchistan in the south-west. Perhaps, more importantly, according to observers here and sources in Kabul, tribesmen in the Afghan interior constantly carry on ambushes and sniper attacks against passing troops".

Possibly in the early stages of the insurgency there might not have been long-range planning and active coordination between Pakistan, the United States and China. But there is not the shadow of doubt that as the situation in Afghanistan deteriorated and insurgency became more widespread, the various possibilities that had now been thrown wide open were fully seized and active planning and coordination came about between the concerned agencies of these three countries. For the United States and China, Pakistan was now a valuable instrument in devising and implementing the new strategy for the Gulf and Middle Eastern countries and the Washington-Beijing-Islamabad combination was calculated to play a major role in this area.

Indeed this was not the first time that a concerted attempt had been made to build up this equation to provide a new balance. A similar effort was undertaken during 1970-71 by the Nixon administration, the only difference being that this time the focus is on the Middle East, while earlier it was hoped to provide a new balance in South and South-East Asia. That was the function of Kissinger's diplomacy during his secret and not-so-secret visits to Peking, the first of which was arranged through the good offices of the Pak-

istani leaders and was launched from Pakistani territory.

At that time this writer had drawn attention (when there were not many takers for the proposition) about the significance of the emergence of this US-China-Pak equation and had also submitted that the most important reason why both Washington and Peking were so rattled at the Bangladesh developments was the disastrous impact it had on the viability and functioning of this equation in Asia. This has been now fully confirmed by Kissinger in his memoirs. The previous balance that the United States had built up in Asia in military alliance with conservative, status-quo countries—South Korea, South Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines etc.—had been discredited and had crumbled. Washington then hoped to build up a more acceptable balance comprising USA, China and Pakistan as its mainstay. The break-up of Pakistan's eastern wing and the emergence of Bangladesh frustrated the attempt at the time. But it has been taken up again with the thrust now towards South and West Asia and it is here that India faces the most formidable and the most grim challenge since Independence.

A PART from the various strategic considerations I have mentioned above, for the Americans the Soviet march into Afghanistan came at a time when they were already reeling under the stunning impact of the seizure of the Embassy and the hostages in Iran. Most Americans would have normally conceded USSR's interests in Afghanistan but for the new situation the US was facing in the whole region. The American giant, or so the US public opinion thought, appeared to the world as a helpless Goliath, fuming in impotent fury but emitting "noise and sound, signifying nothing", and if indeed it signified anything it was that America had lost the capacity to act and was a declining power. The prolonged, agonising crisis over the hostages in Tehran made the U.S. reaction more brittle than it might otherwise have been. These developments also came during an election year exposing President Carter to the charge of appeasement, vacillation and inaction by his political opponents. The "think tank", headed by Special Assistant Brzezinski, is breathing fire in order to carry conviction with the American people that strong men are in charge in Washington.

The options before the Soviets were plain, even if painful. The Hobson's choice was either they shut their eyes, let the revolution be smashed and allow a US-Pak dominated Government take over this sensitive border area with all its strategic consequences or they brave-face general condemnation, don the cap of the hatchet men and use their armed forces to protect the revolution, quell the rebellion, seal the border with

Pakistan, cut off the sources of supply of material and arms and resting ground to the rebels and then, hopefully, enable the radical to consolidate their position in Afghanistan. They took the second course for obvious reasons.

The dangers inherent in such a situation cannot be minimised. The military presence has its own logic and tends to perpetuate itself. There never seems to be an opportune time to withdraw. There can always be more compelling arguments against it. But much more serious, even from the point of the Soviets, foreign military presence rarely endears itself to the local population and carries the danger of actually stiffening such opposition and diverting it into more chauvinistic channels, thus creating a vicious circle which Moscow could find hard to break. In the early stages of the rise of the radical movement, the radicals had also taken on the mantle of nationalism and the upsurge for the reformers included in its mainstream a nationalist upsurge too, but this combination of social change with nationalism is now threatened with rupture and prolonged foreign military presence could bring about a complete break between the two. The appeal of the rebels in the name of religion and the attempt to convert the struggle into a general confrontation with Islamic countries would make the Soviet task that much harder.

This is the total picture that India has to take into account for evolving its policy and its responses to the developing situation. It is not a picture that admits of a single-track policy or simple formulae. The situation bristles with contradictions and storm-signals for the country. Just as it requires a multi-angled understanding and analysis, it calls for a multi-pronged approach, or approaches to be more correct.

Firstly, this US-Beijing-Pak combination, threatening to convert itself into an axis, is in itself an extremely serious development for India. It could create a situation in which India would either be subject to blackmail or be squeezed in a pincer-like confrontation. Each individual country in this combination has its own expectation from this gang-up. Washington and Beijing have their eyes focussed on the Gulf and the Middle East, from Iran to Saudi Arabia to Egypt, although Beijing would not mind the heat to be turned on India too. It may not be the intention of Washington to push India into the meat-grinder, but Pakistan has its own angle and objectives. I shall discuss these presently, but let there be no mistake; this combination in the circumstances that it has come about cannot serve any Indian interests, it can only seriously hurt them.

Secondly, if this is considered in conjunction with developments in the Pacific Ocean region, the prospects can be alarming. A serious effort is afoot to create a Pacific community around a China-Japan-US pivot which would include Australia and New

Zealand at one end and ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Countries—Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore and the Philippines) at the other. Although Japan is stressing the cooperative and economic aspects of this Pacific community concept, the political and strategic implications cannot be lost sight of. It may suit China to have such combinations arise in different parts of the world and be linked with one another, including the NATO.

Thirdly, it needs no clairvoyant perception to realise that the Pakistani ruling junta has its own calculations and considerations and would set its own terms in a situation where the United States and China are chasing Islamabad and offering unlimited assistance. Already the United States has more or less abandoned the effort to prevent Pakistan from detonating a nuclear bomb. There will neither be any modest limit on the supply of arms nor any theoretical, hypothetical conditions about their use. It, therefore, stands to reason that this large-scale injection of arms will first of all be utilised to bolster the military junta in tightening its own unpopular grip over the country. All this arms assistance will be used against the people of Pakistan.

Fourthly and finally, it should be apparent that the arms and armaments to be poured into Pakistan are not going to be employed against Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Pakistan has no intention of getting embroiled in any war against the Soviet troops and in fact if the crunch came and the Soviet troops were to invade Pakistan, not all the arms to be inducted in there would help save that country. If at all they are used, they will be used against India. No matter what Washington might say or hope for, this is a truth which cannot be wished away.

Clearly we cannot depend on the goodwill of this US-China-Pak combination into which will be roped many Islamic countries, nor on their pious assurances and abstract promises. It would be a gratuitous insult to an independent, self-respecting India to be told that she could also stand in queue for arms aid. For thirty years and more India has carried on a ceaseless struggle to keep foreign intervention out of the sub-continent; now it threatens to engulf the sub-continent with a vengeance. Nor has China any business trying to become a major factor in South Asia.

This calls for hectic diplomatic activity and dialogue with all the countries involved: USA, USSR, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Undoubtedly, up to a considerable extent Indian and Soviet interests coincide, albeit with certain important qualifications. India stands to gain more if the radicals remain in power in Kabul rather than be replaced by a conservative, pro-Western mullah-dominated theocratic government. One end of our policy must be to strive for an early withdrawal of Soviet troops for reasons already out-

lined but contingent on the fulfilment of certain conditions. An early Soviet withdrawal would help reduce tensions, soften resistance in Afghanistan, and possibly succeed in averting outside intervention on a more permanent basis in this sub-continent. But Soviet withdrawal can take place only on certain well-understood premises and subject to agreement on those conditions. The most obvious condition is that Pakistan would not render any material and arms assistance to the insurgents in Afghanistan, nor would it offer a sanctuary to them for rest and replenishment. The second condition must be that the United States and China would not change the military balance in the sub-continent and would refrain from signing new military pacts with Pakistan. No large-scale armaments would be poured into Pakistan. It is only in this framework that the withdrawal of Soviet troops can be negotiated.

There is immediate need for a serious and straight-forward dialogue with the United States. We cannot afford to slur over situations and prevaricate over words. We need to be brutally frank. Lord Carrington is reported to have remarked in Delhi that Pakistan was afraid of "an Indo-Soviet axis". Surely it cannot be the US intention to compel India into such a situation, for a nuclear bomb blast by Pakistan coupled with solidification of a US-China-Pak military pact, or the pumping of huge quantities of heavy and sophisticated armour into Islamabad by the West would be the surest way of driving India into seeking security in a closer arrangement and relationship with Moscow.

Regardless of Brzezinski's shrugging away of Indian sensibilities, Washington should be left in no doubt about the consequences of their moves in this direction. Similarly, plain talking and intense dialogue with China should be on the agenda and Beijing should not have any illusion that its more weighty intrusion in Pakistan could co-exist with improvement of relations with India. It should be the function of Indian diplomacy to underline and carry conviction about India's serious interest in promoting detente with China but only on a mutually advantageous basis and that it cannot be delinked from Beijing's abstaining from intervention in South Asian developments. On the face of it all these appear to be tall orders. But does India have any other options?

Finally, India would need to take a hard second look at her nuclear policy. We not only have to keep our options open but in the context of the shadows being cast by coming events, we might have to seriously weigh the compulsions of finally exercising the options. Our research and development programme must immediately provide for that contingency, for we can neither afford to lag behind nor have we too much time to leisurely contemplate our choices.

India's Afghan dilemma

By PRAN CHOPRA

THE re-emergence of super-power politics in South Asia, with Henry Kissinger recommending that America should seek bases in Pakistan and Russian troops marching into Afghanistan, has placed India in a classic dilemma. Principles and morality urge one course upon India. Hard realities point entirely the opposite way. If India has fumbled in handling this dilemma, it is not the first time she has done so; nor is India the only country to have fumbled in such circumstances.

But gradually India has assumed a foreign policy posture which is justifiable, adequate, and from India's

point of view reasonably satisfactory. I think this evolving posture will pass the ultimate test which any foreign policy posture must pass, the test whether it serves India's own interests, especially security interests.

Morality requires clear condemnation of the Soviet Union for what is basically an invasion of Afghanistan. There is no substance in the Soviet plea that it marched its forces across the Afghan border at the invitation of the Government in Kabul, a Government whose dismissal was the first consequence of the Soviet intervention.

The truth is that the Soviet Union felt its essential security interests



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threatened by what was going on in Afghanistan, and it moved in to nip the trouble in the bud. Soviet protégés in Afghanistan, the leaders of the Khalq and Parcham factions in the Communist movement, were fighting among themselves instead of facing up to the anti-Communist insurgency which is receiving assistance from Pakistan and perhaps, through Pakistan, from China and the United States. The insurgency is also receiving encouragement from the Islamic revivalist and fundamentalist movement, of which the most powerful representatives today are the Ayatollahs of Iran, a crucial neighbour of Afghanistan as well as the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union believes this to be a combination which can be deadly for its own security, and has decided to forestall it, without bothering about the rights and wrongs of Afghan sovereignty.

Even before the Khalq and Parcham leaders began to kill each other off they had not quite succeeded in dealing with the insurgents, among whom are elements of both the old feudal order of Afghanistan and the forces of Islamic orthodoxy. But more recently it became a distinct possibility that the Communist regime in Kabul might fall and be replaced by a virulently anti-Communist regime. This could make Afghanistan a dagger pointed at the soft under-belly of the Soviet Union, more dangerous than the confrontation the Soviet Union faces in Europe, because there the Soviet power too is well organised and consolidated.

The Afghan people have strong religious, ethnic and cultural links with the neighbouring Soviet province of Uzbekistan, and the older Uzbeks still feel a strong affinity with the world of Islam outside the Soviet Union. How strong is the nostalgia among these people for the old world of Islam came as a surprise to me during some fairly extensive touring recently in the relatively remote areas of Uzbekistan.

Soviet leaders, especially the Russians among them, have always entertained the hope that they can use these affinities to their advantage. They would like to use the Islamic face of their southern and predominantly Muslim republics for building bridges with and gradually drawing into their own sphere of influence the countries of Islamic orthodoxy which are stretched out south of the Soviet border from Pakistan to south-eastern Europe. But the simultaneous developments in Iran and Afghanistan were threatening to turn the tables on the Soviet Union, with the clear danger that these affinities might be used by anti-Communist forces for wooing the Soviet Islamic republics, whose integration into the Soviet Union I found to be much less complete than that of the west Russian territories. This is not a danger the

Soviet Union could contemplate with any ease.

But all this can only help to explain the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan; it does not justify an intervention which has assumed the proportions of an invasion. All invasions have explanations of one kind or another, and if explanations became justifications, all invasions would be justified. That is why from the very beginning India has expressed more or less strong disapproval of the Soviet military intervention.

To begin with, towards the end of December, the Lok Dal Prime Minister, Mr Charan Singh, as well as the Janata Party through the former Foreign Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee specifically criticised the Soviet Union by name, and demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, and Mr Vajpayee had from the very beginning coupled his criticism of the Soviet Union with criticism of the American intention of using this occasion for resuming the supply of arms to Pakistan.

Mrs Gandhi followed the same line to begin with. Later she said the Soviet action should be judged in its "context", a probable reference to interference in the affairs of Afghanistan by others as well. Later still she became less specific, and so did the Government after she became the Prime Minister. She changed over to criticising the presence of foreign troops in any country, not specifically that of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, and instead of demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops, New Delhi changed over to expressing confidence in the Soviet assurance that the troops would be withdrawn as soon as the situation allowed.

This much element of disapproval has continued to be a part of the new Indian Government's policy. It was contained in the fresh instructions to the Indian representative at the United Nations, and he duly voiced it in the UN General Assembly debate on January 12. Therefore it is not correct to say, as has been in some quarters, that Mrs Gandhi or her Government started disapproving of the Soviet action only when its implications were explained to them by the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, during his recent visit to New Delhi.

This limited disapproval of the Soviet action has not saved India from the acute embarrassment of being isolated from the bulk of the non-aligned movement on this issue, an isolation which became painfully clear in the vote the UN General Assembly took on January 15 on a resolution, mostly backed by the non-aligned countries although actively piloted by the western powers, strongly condemning the Soviet intervention.

If the Government in New Delhi had not been passing through such a transitional phase just at the time when this crisis was mounting India might have played its cards a bit better. It might have brought the



Russian Armoured Personnel Carriers equipped with light guns seen with Afghan military personnel at the intersection of the Kabul-Jalalabad road

"context" into a sharper focus so that the Assembly might have urged both super powers to stop their respective interferences in this region. But seeing that the country the Soviet forces have marched into, is firstly a Muslim country and secondly a member of the non-aligned movement (and, what is ironic, became a member only with India's active help) it was inevitable that a number of UN members would join hands to condemn the Soviet Union, and the leadership America gave to this sentiment assured a major success for US diplomacy in the United Nations.

But in its essentials India had to shape its course according to India's vital interests, especially security needs, and not according to what the voting pattern would be in the UN. India had to focus on, and by denouncing oppose, the American efforts to resume its previous policy of rearming Pakistan, a policy which has proved disastrous in the past, and more for Pakistan than for anyone else; it has undermined the security of Pakistan by undermining its polity. India also had to oppose and denounce the combined Sino-American efforts to make the South Asian region a theatre of the additional rivalry between the Soviet Union and China. These efforts have far more

dangerous security implications for India than can result from any temporary parting of the ways with many of the non-aligned countries.

I think India's opposition has had some impact. At least for the time being it has restricted the supply of arms to Pakistan. Two hundred million dollars worth of military aid for the next two years (the rest is economic aid) is not going to buy many arms for Pakistan and is certainly not going to modernise the Pakistan forces, which is the price Pakistan is reported to be asking for any role it may be asked to play in Afghanistan. If reports by American correspondents from Washington are correct (and Lord Carrington has confirmed them) the United States has decided not to resume supply of American military aircraft to Pakistan although earlier the very sophisticated aircraft, the A 7, had been included in the list according to these correspondents.

Indications are now accumulating that this particular crisis will blow over, and the position taken by India might have contributed to this. Recognition is dawning all around that it is impossible to force the Russians out of Afghanistan. Therefore it is possible that thoughts will now turn more readily to the only alternative

there is, that conditions should be created in which the new Afghanistan Government can itself ask them to go—and that it can only do if other countries stop inciting and assisting the present rebellion against it. At the same time the furore created over the Russian intervention in Afghanistan will also probably have the effect of convincing the Soviet Union that the world will react very strongly if the intervention is further extended into Pakistan (or on the other side into Iran). This also is beneficial for India's interests. India is certainly opposed to the rearming of Pakistan with foreign military aid. But India has no interest in seeing Pakistan disintegrate under Soviet impact. On the contrary India has a vested interest in the viability and stability of Pakistan.

Therefore, if the noise India has made has helped to dissuade the Americans from pouring arms into Pakistan too recklessly (which would have made a Russian intervention in Pakistan only more likely) and the noise the Americans have made has convinced Moscow that marching in to Pakistan would provoke a clash between the super powers, then Indian policy can be said to have arrived home by however zig-zag a course.

THE mood of units of the Soviet army in Afghanistan has turned ugly as they wait for spring, and the decision of Moscow on whether to advance and pour in reinforcements, or deflate Western anger by staging a tactical withdrawal. In the last days of the old year, Red Army men greeted Western journalists cheerfully, and showed them T-62 tanks which had been paraded when Moscow installed its own nominee, Babrak Karmal, as President.

As travel and operational restrictions on the foreign newsmen increased steadily, there were still reports of friendly Soviet soldiers, but these were fewer and further between. Instead, Russians fired machine gun bullets at the feet, or over the heads, of newsmen, or forced them — an Indian television team experienced this — to stand in the snow for four hours during interrogation about their movements. The Russians seize television film when they can, and a Soviet official even plays excerpts of the recording tapes carried by journalists when they go through the baggage check at Kabul airport. Anything political is confiscated.

The second stage of the revolution is ending, in failure. It was a public relations attempt to persuade

The Red army: Preparing for spring

PETER NIESEWAND
reports from
Afghanistan

the Western media that the Russians had not really taken over Afghanistan, but that the bloody regime of Hafizullah Amin had merely been supplanted by a popular, independent-minded Afghan administration, with just a little temporary help from the socialist neighbour. The facade is easily dismantled. Kabul is built on a flat plain — icy at this time of year — surrounded by snow-covered mountains. For several weeks, you had to look hard to see a Russian soldier. But they were there: a cast of thousands, out of sight.

I needed an exit visa, and got caught up in the Afghan bureaucracy. By mistake, someone sent me to the Ministry of the Interior. From the outside, everything seemed normal. Afghan soldiers guarded the gates, and the Ministry building it

self, set back from the road looked quiet enough. Just inside the foyer, however, the scene changed. Armed Russian soldiers were everywhere, on duty at the entrance, walking in their scores out of offices and along corridors, going about their daily business. Behind the building, hidden from public view, were half a dozen armoured personnel carriers (APCs) to carry them to and from their camp.

These Russians were not the high-cheek boned types who might be mistaken for Afghans and who come from the central Asian republics. They were stocky, fair-haired European Russians, who in their off-duty hours, are not able to walk alone on the streets of the capital in safety. Afghans hate them, as they have hated all invaders, including the British. "Khal!" they hiss if they

Afghan Mujahideen rebels in Paktia province with their old weapons



mistake you for a Russian. It means "donkey", and it is not an epithet to be disregarded in Afghanistan. The people here have a habit of skinning alive captured Russians, and failing that, they might shoot or stab before discovering a person's nationality. Fifteen Russians were reported murdered in Kabul in the first four weeks of the invasion, most of them knifed in the street. Later, Afghan snipers went to work, and in broad daylight, gunned down two Soviet soldiers, killing one of them.

Immediately afterwards, Soviet tactics changed noticeably. More Russians appeared on the streets in daylight, always in groups. Soviet tanks and trucks and APCs rumbled back into Kabul. The mood became even grimmer. Many western analysts believe that the current Russian force in Afghanistan — six divisions — is little more than the advance guard for an army which might number about 200,000 by the time the spring thaw sets in.

Digging in has been a long, hard task, even though the Russians chose the right time for it. Snow and ice blanket much of the country. The mountain tops, which for eight months of the year are occupied by Muslim rebels, have mostly been vacated for the winter. The war is at a low ebb. While this fact is not always reflected in the claims made by the American Embassy in Kabul, it is generally accepted by diplomats of other countries and is also reflected in the small number of casualties being brought into the rebel clinics and hospitals across the border in Pakistan.

Of course, there have been clashes. With about 75,000 Russian soldiers in the country, it is inevitable that from time to time, they will run across guerrilla bands, and skirmishes will develop, but so far, no major battles. The Soviet logistic lines are long, and sometimes vulnerable. Western sources believe that at one point, military units posted in remote parts of Kunar province, were running short of food and fuel.

One of the main supply lines is the road through the Salang Pass to Kabul — a high, rugged and treacherous part of the Hindu Kush. The road is narrow. Mountains loom on either side. It is perfect ambush territory. Muslim rebels have been active in the area, blowing up at least three bridges and at one point during January, trapping a huge Russian convoy of about 200 supply vehicles until a military bridge could be erected to allow them to pass.

THIS is, however, part of the lull. Real fighting is expected to begin in April and May — whatever course of action the Russians take. Already Afghan men have begun leaving refugee camps in Pakistan to begin the journey back to their homelands to join the rebels. When British Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, visited



Russian tank patrolling outskirts of Kabul

one camp outside Peshawar in January and spoke to the refugees, what he was not told was that within a few hours, hundreds of the men would be gone, heading back for the fight.

Military experts believe it will be an unequal contest, in which the rebels are certain to lose every set-piece battle. The Russians are now as numerically strong as the Afghan army ever was, but infinitely better equipped and trained. It is doubtful whether the old cry of "We threw out the British three times, and we'll throw out the Russians, too", remains valid. Time has marched on. The latest invaders are equipped with helicopter gunships, the most modern MIG fighters, napalm — and possibly with the ingredients for chemical warfare. Soviet decontamination units have been spotted moving into Afghanistan. The unavoidable implication is that one of the weapons in the Moscow arsenal is designed to contaminate.

There are fears in Pakistan that the Russian battle-plan for the next twelve months will be to attack the Afghans ferociously and without mercy, killing thousands — but more important, driving others, with their livestock, over the border into refugee camps. This could have a major destabilising effect on the Pushtoon and Baluch tribal areas, leading to fights over grazing rights, and putting an ever-increasing strain on the Pakistani administration.

But another school of thought believes that Moscow may decide on a more subtle approach, designed to save the Olympic Games and take the wind out of western sails. A western source explained: "It could be the old 'two steps forward, one step

back' game. If the Russians suddenly reduced their troop strength in Afghanistan, making it look like a withdrawal, our campaign would probably lose impetus and collapse. There'd still be Russians in Afghanistan, of course, and Babrak Karmal, or someone like him, would be in power, so nothing radical would have changed. Then after the Olympics, the Soviets could slowly move their men back".

There is also the possibility that Babrak Karmal himself might be replaced. This is a scenario suggested by the State Department in Washington, but given some backing within Afghanistan itself. Hints of official Soviet displeasure and signs of internal power rivalries were contained in an editorial in the *Kabul New Times* which roundly criticised Karmal's attempts to form a broader political base. "If a man like Karmal hesitates for a moment to come to grips with the most urgent problems of our time, this would not contribute to his credibility among the intelligentsia," the newspaper said. Just before the editorial was published, official photographs of Karmal were removed from government offices and city squares.

Karmal was central to the abortive Soviet public relations campaign. When foreign reporters were invited into Afghanistan, the new President had an unrivalled opportunity to put his case: to offer an explanation for the Soviets overthrowing Hafizullah Amin, and bringing Karmal back from exile to head the new Government. But his set-piece Press conference degenerated quickly into a Marxist versus capitalist slanging match, out of which virtually no new information, however implausible, emerged.

Karmal himself set the tone of his Press conference with a short, but fighting, opening address. "Distinguished correspondents, from the friendly countries," the President began, addressing the front rows of Soviet journalists who had been packed in before the Western press even arrived. Then, casting his eyes across at the rest of us at the back, he went on: "and distinguished correspondents from the opposition, on behalf of the heroic People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan I express my sincere gratification to you."

"Distinguished correspondents from the Opposition, I would like to put this question to you. When American imperialism and the agents of imperialism finished slaying Nur Muhammad Tarakki, the legitimate leader of Afghanistan, and grasped power unlawfully, where were you at that time?"

"Where were you, mate?" muttered a journalist in reply. President Karmal, who arrived from exile in Czechoslovakia aboard a Russian military transport after the coup against Hafizullah Amin had begun, continued: "Amin and the Aminis were in close collaboration with imperialism, international and regional reaction. Now I challenge you to put up your questions." Twenty reporters leapt to their feet, accepting the challenge. A West German correspondent won. "Mr President, I would like to answer your question about where we were," he said. "We were here when Amin was in power. We attacked his brutal regime, but we were amazed that the Soviet Union supported it."

There was a long silence.

"The Soviet Union," President Karmal said stiffly, "in consonance with its principled and peaceful foreign policy, will never interfere in the internal affairs of any country, and has never interfered and meddled in the internal affairs of any country."

The conference continued in that vein. When had he been "democratically elected" and by whom? Why did Russian troops needed to install him in office? Was he sure he was not going to end up the same way as Afghanistan's other leaders—killed by his rivals? What percentage of the people supported him? This last question, an easy one which generally attracts the answer "Ninety-nine per cent" was addressed to Karmal by a representative of the BBC. Even that failed to draw a reply. Instead, Karmal attacked the BBC as "the most famous propagandist liar in the world." It was a poor performance which persuaded the Soviets to bring it to a close after just over one hour, instead of the scheduled two hours.

Karmal himself is clearly low in his country's popularity stakes. "He has sold us to the Russians," an Afghan man told me angrily before walking quickly on. The notorious Pol-a-Char prison on the outskirts of Kabul has lost a couple of thousand of Amin's political prisoners, but it

is generally believed to be filling up with Karmal's. The people talk briefly, afraid of spies.

The growing sullenness of Russian troops may be due in part to the realisation that they are among a brutal and warlike people who hate them with religious fervour. In one area, on the main road north of Kabul to the Soviet Union, it reached the point where Russian soldiers began looting the cars of Afghans who were stopped at their checkpoints. A group of ten Soviet soldiers from the 16th Motorised Rifles—one of the five divisions which invaded Afghanistan at the end of December—forced my taxi to halt near the entrance to the Salang Pass one freezing afternoon. Two other western journalists and myself first thought that the Russians were carrying out a routine search for arms, a natural enough occurrence in a particularly dangerous area. The Russian soldiers, armed with Kalashnikov rifles, body-searched us on the roadside, and then as we waited in the sub-zero temperatures, they began going through the car. First they turned up two maps of Afghanistan which a colleague and myself had bought at our Kabul hotel. Other journalists had warned us to expect to lose these. Soviet maps of Afghanistan are said to be of inferior quality. The leader of the Russian squad, a tall, burly, grim-faced man in a greatcoat and boots, with a red star on his cap, appropriated the maps, presumably feeling he could argue that these were military secrets.

We showed him our official Afghan Press accreditation cards which are signed by the chief of security, the Minister of Information and Culture, and the President of Publications. These "earnestly request all civil and security authorities of the country to give every possible aid to the holder of this card". The Russian soldier appeared unimpressed, but he left alone our other belongings, including a camera and a tape recorder.

The Afghan driver did not fare as well. The soldier took from him three tape cassettes of Afghan music, and from the glove compartment of the car which they made him unlock, they stole 2,870 Afghanis (about Rs 560). Then with brusque gesticulations, they ordered us to turn the car around and get out. As the driver stood silently, we argued with the soldiers, demanding the return of our goods. But they were armed and clearly in no mood to be challenged. Also, another carload of Afghans was approaching, with a considerable amount of baggage in the back, and they were in a hurry.

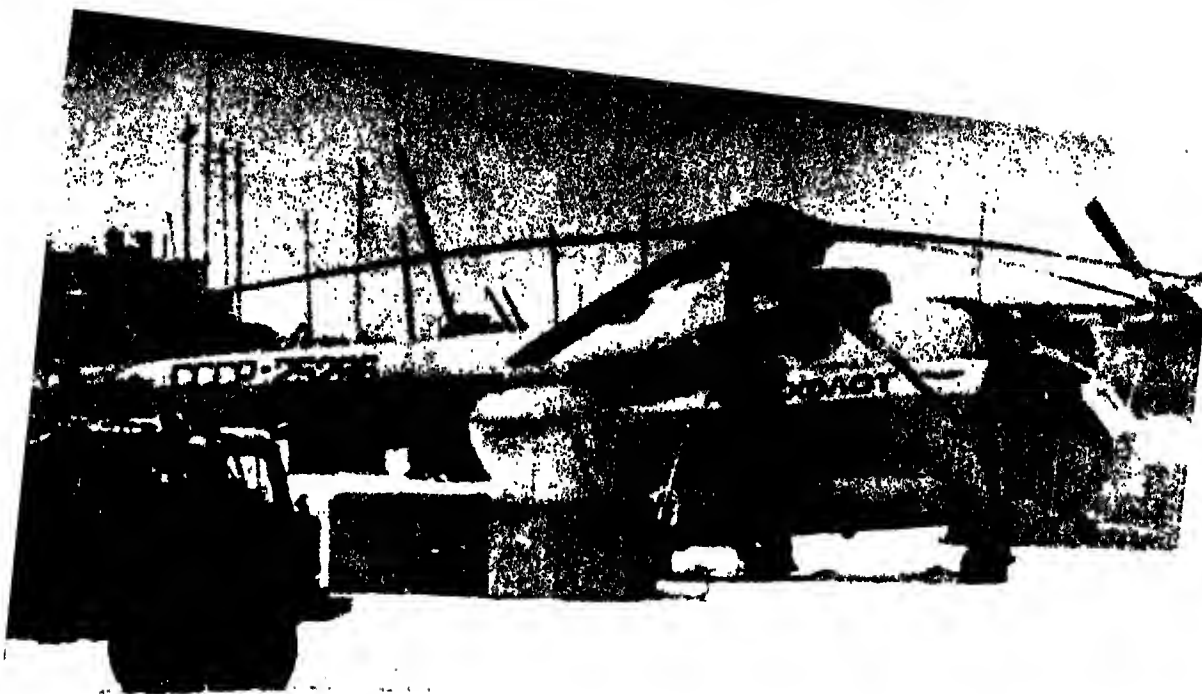
Our driver cursed the Russians loudly and violently for much of the return journey to Kabul. He was obviously shaken and refused to venture along any other roads. "Do not speak of this back at the hotel," he implored. "There are many spies there. Do not tell them which taxi it was or they will want to know why I took you to the Sa-

lang Pass and they will put me in gaol." The Russian looters had judged their victim well. Whereas we Westerners might complain officially if they were too greedy with our belongings, an Afghan would feel powerless. And for all the hatred that burned inside the driver—"Fucking Russians!" he swore as we passed the tanks, APCs and the large military encampments of the Soviet army along the road, "Fucking Russians!"—in the end, fear would keep him quiet.

THE Soviet choice for the divisions sent to Afghanistan is interesting and significant. Although there are soldiers from the central Asian republics, many of whom, out of uniform, could pass for Afghans, the bulk of those sighted so far are European Russians who could pass for Swedes or Germans. The reason for this may be that the Soviets have their own internal problems too, and that faint rumblings of discontent have been heard from people living in the border republics. Rockets of resentment within the Soviet Muslim communities are watching events in Afghanistan, and the lessons contained for themselves.

Decades of fierce repression have not completely subdued the Muslims of Turkmenia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and there are signs that the Krenin may soon take a harder line with the people of these border republics and their leaders. Even before the revolutionary Islamic wave began sweeping the Middle East and parts of Asia, enough was happening in the border areas to make Moscow uneasy. In the first place, the Muslim population explosion is enormous—three to four times higher than that recorded elsewhere in the Soviet Union. The population of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan increased by more than 30 per cent during the period 1966-69, compared with an average of nine per cent for the USSR as a whole; a growing problem to confront Moscow in a few years. This increase is not exclusively Muslim. It includes other non-Russian groups, although in Tajikistan, three quarters of the population of the largely agricultural area are Sunni Muslims, speaking an Iranian dialect.

There has been considerable resistance in the republics to assimilation by Mother Russia, despite the new national anthems approved by the Supreme Soviet last year. "Salam, Russian brother, great is thy people!" begins the new Uzbekistan anthem. The fact is, however, that the people have gone to great lengths to avoid learning to speak Russian. So much so, that in October 1978, the USSR Council of Ministers issued a decree on improving the study and teaching of their language. They followed that up in May last year with a National Conference on Russian, held at Tashkent, 500 kilometers from the Afghan border. At the conference the



Aeroflot helicopters in Kabul Airport

USSR's Minister of Education called for the wider use of Russian among the non-Russian population, including its use in kindergartens. New colleges for training Russian teachers were set up in several of the central Asian republics.

Moscow has also been alarmed at the apparent neglect of the sector of industry in the area—'Ministerial neglect'. President Leonid Brezhnev called it in a key note speech to the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee in November 1978, although he added, "Cadres working in the economy must be held personally responsible for its management." There is an important gas and oil extraction industry in the border republics, as well as a significant agricultural sector and they were all well below their quotas in the five year plan. A purge went on through last year; top officials were sacked, others reshuffled. Significantly in Tajikistan, the secretary in charge of ideology on the party Central Committee was also denied, indicating that the problems in the area were deep and basic. The Republic of Turkmenia, which has borders with both Iran and Afghanistan, came in for particularly far-reaching changes, with most of its leaders being ousted on orders from the Kremlin. A report in *Pravda* accused the Turkmen of idle talk and neglect of unfinished work.

Yet in pursuit of its policy of détente—a policy which collapsed with the military adventure in Afghanistan—Moscow had been planning an international Muslim conference in Tashkent next September, to mark the beginning of the 15th century of the Hegirah, and act as a demonstration of its constitutional commitment to freedom of religion. A

preliminary international Muslim meeting was held in the city of Dushanbe, 150 kilometers from Afghanistan, last year, and was attended by delegates from 25 Muslim countries. At it, the leader of Muslims in Soviet Central Asia and in the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mufti Ziya-ud-din Babakhan, emphasised that Soviet Muslims were very conscious of their duty towards Islam and Allah, and that they sought co-operation with their brothers in

But that was before the Islamic revolutionary blaze really got underway. Now Moscow must do whatever it can to prevent events across the borders from further unsettling its burgeoning Muslim community, most of their children and teenagers who are considered susceptible to imported militant fervour. The military success of Muslim rebels in Afghanistan against the Tarakki and Amin regimes has already set an unwelcome example, particularly as Russia was involved in nipping up the Kabul Governments. A final rebel victory would certainly have been a humiliation for Moscow and might have had repercussions across the border.

BUT if the Soviet Union has simmering problems on her own border which must be taken into account when deciding the next moves, Pakistan has far worse. The difference is, the Soviets know their problems, but there are few signs that General Zia ul-Haq fully realises this. Zia, in whose breast the fire of Islam burns, is fond of remarking: "Allah will provide". This time, Allah seems to have come up trumps.

Zia—hated by the people whose silence he enforces with summary imprisonment and public floggings—has turned from being an international pariah, stealthily making a nuclear bomb, to being part of the West's defence against the Soviet advance. When the Russians invaded Afghanistan, Zia's luck changed. A Western diplomat admitted: "Frankly, we thought Zia would have collapsed around March because of the economic crisis in Pakistan. The effect of Western aid now will undoubtedly be to prop him up." The West, preoccupied with the Russian threat, has taken scant notice of the feelings of the people. This could be a mistake, for which they will pay later. Below the surface, a volcano is rumbling. There are many pointers to it.

Just after New Year, when the Red Army had moved into Afghanistan threatening the Western frontier, and Pakistan's old enemy, Mrs Gandhi, had romped back to power in India making the eastern frontier look suddenly also insecure, people in the province of Sind celebrated a visitor there recalled: "There was a mublation. They were handing round sweets and behaving as if twin sons had been born." It was one sign of the new, disturbed, nihilistic times. In Islamabad, a man was asked: "The threat from the Russians means Pakistanis would now rally around General Zia, fle answer with a parody-laden donkey along a path," he said, "when suddenly he saw a man approaching. The man shouted: 'Run! Run!' He turned to him and said: 'Who is my master, I will be just as he is laden as I am now. You run.' If this is a testing time

Pakistan, shackled by a particularly brutal martial law regime, it is also being regarded by many of the people as a test for the democratic nation. "This aid America is talking about is not aid to the people," a politician of one of the newly-banned Parties said. "It is aid to the army junta. They will perhaps use it on the wrong people—on the Pakistanis and particularly the Baluchis." Baluchistan is the most vulnerable of Pakistan's border provinces—a wild, tribal area which has hardly advanced from the Middle Ages. Yet a tribal chief said disdainfully: "The West is interested in her own overall interests in this region, whoever safeguards that or guarantees that, be he the devil himself or a cut-throat, the West would support him. Western democracy has always propped up dictators. They find it easier to deal with them."

Another Baluchi chief declared: "We want a return to democracy and we want it now. But democracy by itself is not enough. The new Government must also give Baluchistan its rights. We want provincial autonomy. We have been discriminated against for years. If we get our rights, the country will be united and it will be more difficult for the Russians. The West could help. They could force the junta to restore democracy and democratic institutions immediately and refuse to give aid until that happens. If not..." he shrugged dismissively. "If the West props up Zia and the Russians move south there will be no civil resistance as I see it. Some might even be prepared to aid them."

It is difficult to get people in Pakistan to stand up publicly and voice their opinions. Under martial law, seven years imprisonment and lashes can be awarded to a person who makes a political statement, even to the foreign press. Perhaps because of his position, Sardar Akbar Bugti is prepared to take the risk. He is a magnificent, grey-bearded regal figure of a man, educated abroad and polished, and at 52, still built like an oak while he would be an amusing and civilised guest at any Western diplomatic dinner table; at home he is a Baluchi chief who literally has the power of life and death over 1,00,000 people. Recently he presided over a trial by ordeal. A man had been accused of adultery and the matter could not easily be resolved. Sardar Bugti ordered a pit to be filled with burning charcoal, and the accused was forced to walk across it with bare feet. At the other end, seeing the fire had not harmed him, Bugti pronounced the man innocent. Later, the woman accuser admitted she had lied.

The tribal areas of Pakistan are special, rugged, mountainous places. Visitors are not allowed in even with permission, rarely granted. The areas are still administered under treaties negotiated by the British in the last



Russian infantryman in Kabul

century, and Government writ simply does not run there. The Russians know this well.

Sardar Bugti's tribal land is one of the areas into which the Soviet army will penetrate first if it pushes southwards. Bugti is sanguine about the prospect. He does not rule out a deal with the Russians, although he doubts one will be offered. What would he do, for example, if the Russians promised him they would unite the Baluch areas which spread across the borders of Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan? "I don't know," he replied. "It depends how heavy are the chains with these proposals. One has a certain kind of chains now. Perhaps other chains may be heavier. But in any case, we are a weak people, a poor people. Suppressed people don't have any choice. Whoever has the strength and power can simply take. Powerful people don't negotiate. They take what they want." It is a tribal truth which the Baluchis understand. The Pakistan army—even with new western equipment—ranged against the might of the Soviet super-power, is an unimpressive prospect.

The tribesmen could, if they had the will, harry the Russians with guerrilla warfare just as the Baluch did for four years until 1977 to the Pakistani army. But many of them now appear to lack the will to resist. They feel they have little left to lose. They say that, for years, they have been treated as second class citizens in Pakistan. They complain they have been discriminated against in employment, that their areas have been virtually ignored economically. They want autonomy for Baluchistan. To complicate the matter, hundreds of Pakistani tribesmen, trained in Moscow and Cuba, are now based across the border in Afghanistan. Senior tribal sources say they are awaiting Soviet orders to begin the campaign to sever Baluchistan from the Pak-

istan federation. The guerrillas are members of the Marri tribe, who became refugees in 1973 when the Bhutto Government ordered the army to crush the Baluchi secessionist movement. Fierce fighting caused about 10,000 Marri men, women and children to flee into Afghanistan. Yet when Zia came to power in 1978 and declared an amnesty, only a couple of hundred returned.

The Marri refugees are reported to be living in the cities of Kabul, Herat and Kandahar, and more than a thousand of their young men have been to the Soviet Union and Cuba for training in "arms and ideology", tribal sources said. In Moscow, their guerrilla education was completed at the Patrice Lumumba University. Tribal leaders in Baluchistan maintain close touch with the Marri refugees. Guerrilla cadres regularly come across the border. "They infiltrate and look around and exchange news and views and then go back," a tribal source said. "Their families don't come—just the men."

Today, the continuing presence of the military regime seems to be having the effect of pushing many Pakistanis into the Russian camp. "Nobody wants Russia in their heart of hearts," a Baluchi politician said. "But compared to Zia, they say they would prefer it." Another declared: "I don't think we will have any choice in the matter. We are convinced that the Pakistan army is not going to fight. Zia is not going to fight. Fifty per cent of the officers are engaged in administering martial law. The moment Zia goes to war, he will be toppled by other army officers. They want Mercedes cars, not tanks."

Zia's tough regime is disliked in Pakistan to a degree which would no doubt shock the military ruler if he became aware of it: a degree which the West does not seem to appreciate. "This is the most unpopular regime we have ever had," a man said. "It is being propped up by public lashings, the blackening of people's faces with paint, fines of millions of rupees, and terrorism." A Baluch asked: "What values are there in Pakistan? What rights have you here as a Baluchi, as a Pathan? Where is the liberty? Where are the human rights, the security, the sense of dignity, the sense of honour? Anybody can walk into my house and drag my son out and flog him." Even a Government official who was hotly defending Zia's administration and the need for it to continue indefinitely, finally conceded: "Eighty per cent of the people are against martial law."

When I repeated this to a Sindi businessman he replied angrily: "And America and Britain of course will back the other 20 per cent. Democracy aiding dictatorship. Isn't that typical." A senior police officer, who was sitting next to him and who might have taken him into custody immediately for making a political statement, said nothing. He only nodded gloomily.

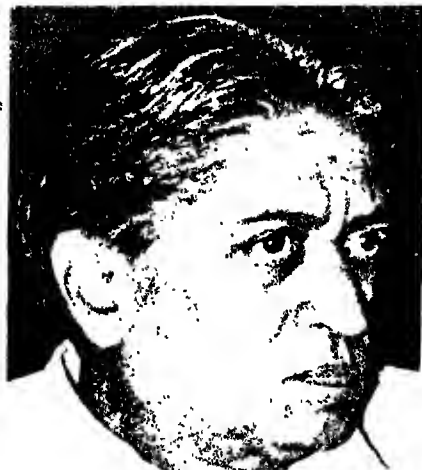
Moscow Olympics and Western hypocrisy

NO COUNTRY CAN trample the life and liberty of another and expect to conduct business or sports as usual with the rest of the world." That is not Karl Marx talking, nor even Neto, or Nyerere. This is none other than the pious President of the United States of America a nation where, according to a recent Gallup poll, 52 per cent of the people want to send the marines to settle the problems they are having in the Middle East. Making that statement, President Carter was calling for a boycott of the Moscow Olympics, in protest against the Russian invasion of Afghanistan. "It is not politics when one nation sends 100,000 of its heavily armed troops across a border and subjugates its peace-loving, deeply religious neighbour. It is not politics when one nation invades this nation's capital, installs a puppet regime, and participates in the assassination or death of the leaders which it does not like, including the families of those leaders". Very good, Mr Carter. But do you remember Vietnam, Mr Carter? And everything the USA did there, Mr Carter, including assassination of leaders? Remember that a man called Allende was killed? And has it never crossed your mind that nations like South Africa exist, and that British rugby teams play with their white brethren from South Africa, and would you care to join an international boycott of Great Britain, which had three Prime Ministers in a row who knew about sanctions busting by one of their major oil companies in Rhodesia but conveniently looked the other way? The list of brutal crimes committed by the western regimes against the oppressed people of Africa and Asia is endless, Mr Carter, but your conscience has never been so thoroughly awoken as at the moment: why, Mr Carter?

I agree: the presence of Russian troops in Afghanistan is very wrong, but what right do nations who have conducted their foreign policies on the strength of gunboats, and later napalm, have to talk about morality today? Why should we participate in a boycott of the Moscow Olympics in order to please the white nations of the western world? When all through the Sixties and the Seventies the black African nations were protesting to the West against South Africa, when the black nations used the logic which Mr Carter is dishing out now to boycott the Olympic Gam-

es, they were derided by the same western establishment and the media as spoilsports who were mixing politics with sport (this was considered a dirty thing to do then, remember?) The black nations were accused of being crybabies. It was by this theory that the western regimes, so nicely democratic at home, kept trying to cloak the brutal and barbaric regime of South Africa. Even today, the South African Government cannot survive without overt and covert cooperation with the USA and Britain. The krugers and continues to be advertised in *Punch* magazine, and the history of the shares of South African business houses continues to remain the history of imperialism. And if the world did not think it fit to boycott the Munich Olympics and the Montreal Olympics and the Mexico Olympics because of Vietnam or South Africa or Rhodesia or

Image makers



Romesh Chandra

Mozambique or Chile, then there is no reason to boycott the Moscow Olympics. If Steve Biko was not good enough to stop the Olympics, then Babrak Karmal cannot be good enough either.

Britain, in particular, seems to be responding to the Afghanistan issue with a hysteria which even exceeds the very high limits set by Mrs Margaret Thatcher herself. Britain is taking "revenge" on the USSR by deporting Romesh Chandra from London airport! The stupidity of nations with memories of power, but now withering in the agony of impotence, can be astonishing!

Once again, one must reiterate that the Russian soldier in Afghanistan is a dangerous sight which cannot but send shivers down the backs of neighbours, but the real tragedy is that the democratic superpowers opposing the USSR have lost their credibility on such

issues. In fact, this seems to be the secret of Russian successes in foreign policy: they realise that their major opponents, the western nations and the Chinese, simply do not arouse sympathy in the third world any more. And how could they? The record shows that the USA has generally been on the opposite side of people's movements, whether in Latin America, or Africa, or Asia. In Bangladesh, Yahya Khan was sent help, not Mujib. In fact, the last time that the USA did anything more than provide lip sympathy to a national movement was when Roosevelt supported our freedom struggle. How much pressure did the western nations put on Portugal to get out of Africa? Eventually Cuban soldiers turned up. Even now, how can anyone be convinced that the regime of General Zia in Pakistan, with no legitimacy and less popular support, a regime which habitually indulges in barbarism against its own people, is less repressive than the one Mr Karmal is in charge of? So, how can President Zia's government be depended upon to fight for "democracy" in Afghanistan? It is a contradiction in terms. Incidentally, a further paradox rules: the mullahs, who are such "authoritarians" and "insane" populists in Iran have suddenly become "democrats" in Afghanistan. What an irony to find Mr Brzezinski say "Allah is great" in a refugee camp on the borders of Afghanistan! He also assured the refugees that God was on their side. Apparently, God and President Carter make a devastating combination.

The basic lesson for us in the third world, particularly in the nonaligned third world, is the lesson of Vietnam: the only weapon against a superpower is the strength of principled independence. While help for our causes can be welcomed, weapons never can be bought in exchange of independence. The games that superpowers play are dangerous, but the best reply to an offensive by one superpower is not to run crying into the arms of the other. As far as the Olympics are concerned, our stand must be what it has been in the past. If we did not join the black nations in their boycott in 1977, there is no reason why we should respond to the call for boycott given by President Carter, and his most strident unofficial ambassador, Mrs Thatcher. We can condemn Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in other ways.

M J AKBAR

What happened to N. K. Singh?

Was his the first case of victimisation by the new Government? The full story.

By **UDAYAN SHARMA**

JANUARY 29 saw a cold and foggy morning in Delhi. But Nirmal Kumar Singh, DIG, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was awake by 5.30 in his Satya Marg flat in the Chanakyapuri area. He was in a relaxed mood. The tensions of his job, particularly the role he had played in the prosecution of the Kissa Kursi Ka case, had taken their toll, but the previous evening the CBI's new director, Mr J. S. Bawa had asked him to go on leave. N. K. Singh was not going to office that day.

Suddenly, the telephone rang. A

The Haryana police jeep outside N. K. Singh's residence



telephone call so early in the morning? On a holiday? From the other end somebody whispered into the receiver: "The police is looking for you. They are searching for your house in the whole of Chanakyapuri, but nobody is telling them. They have already gone to your old residence." Then the line went dead. But N. K. Singh was now mentally prepared for what was to follow. He told his wife; and she barely managed to suppress her tears. Ever since her husband had taken up the Kissa case, the family had known no peace. And to add to the sorrow had been a personal tragedy: a hit-and-run driver had killed her 18-year-old son on a Delhi road

last year (this was a pure accident).

N. K. Singh shaved, drank some tea, and got ready. At 6.30 the doorbell rang. It was the Haryana police; two jeepsloads of armed police officers waiting for him. In the meanwhile the police had taken up position all around Singh's flat. The officers who had come to the door were the DSP, Gurgaon, an SHO of the Gurgaon city police station and an ASI. They asked Singh to step out of his house for a minute, as they wanted to talk to him. N. K. Singh thought that if he stepped out of his house, he would be arrested immediately. In turn, he asked them why they had come. The police told him that he would have to accompany them to Gurgaon, as there was a criminal case against him.

Singh was nonplussed. The Haryana police then informed him that the case against him was that two inspectors of the CBI had abducted a person called Ramchandra. Ramchandra was a driver in Maruti, and this allegedly happened in May 1977. N. K. Singh felt the whole thing to be absurd, as Ramchandra had been interrogated in May 1977, and his statement relating to the interrogation had already been recorded. And now these policemen were saying that suddenly, without any warning, he should go to Gurgaon to be interrogated by a senior officer on the same subject. Singh pointed out that he was only doing his duty when summoning Ramchandra for interrogation. He also asked if the police had brought any relevant papers. And he pointed out to them that he could not leave Delhi without informing his senior officer, the director of the CBI. By this time, the conversation was taking place in the drawing room, where the Haryana policemen had been invited to sit. Singh told them that he would not leave before talking to the director of the CBI.

R. K. Sharma (Indian Express)

In the meanwhile, a number of wives of bureaucrats and police officers had reached Singh's house to show their sympathy. And their comments spelt out the fear that this was only the beginning of a fresh round of victimisation. Mrs Singh said: "Is this the reward for sincerity and honesty?" The police were also getting irritated by this delay in being able to take N. K. Singh and kept asking him to leave. But he would not: the police did not have a specific arrest warrant. In the bedroom were the women, and in the drawing room the policemen. N. K. Singh offered that if interrogation was the only motive for taking him away, then he was willing to come anywhere, anytime, if only the police would give him some notice: what was the point of suddenly dragging him away to Haryana? But the policemen became tough now, and began insisting that Singh come quietly

with them, they could not wait much longer. Singh again pleaded that he had not been able to inform his superior without whose permission he was not allowed to leave Delhi: only a clear arrest could force him to go. A policeman said that N. K. Singh was free to think whatever he wanted, but he would have to go. At 9.45, N. K. Singh finally left with the Haryana policemen.

Outside, photographers of the *Indian Express* were taking pictures. Seeing them, one policeman asked them who had given them permission to take pictures. He got a fitting reply: "Janaab, photographers do not need permission to take pictures in Delhi".

Jeep number HRG 4589 of the Haryana police took away N. K. Singh. Singh, a rajput from Saharsa, Bihar, joined the IAS and entered the Orissa cadre in 1961. For the last seven and a half years he has been working in the CBI, and during this while he has built up a reputation for honesty. He also became the main police officer handling the main charges against the Indira Gandhi family. In October 1977, it was N. K. Singh who went on behalf of the CBI to arrest Mrs Gandhi, and he confronted Sanjay Gandhi in many courts.

The Haryana police jeep reached Gurgaon police station (the road it had taken, ironically, went past the land taken by the Maruti factory) around 10.30. K. P. Singh, also in the CBI, had also gone with N. K. Singh. N. K. Singh had been told that a senior police officer would interrogate him, but there was no sign of this "senior" person, a "senior SI" who would interrogate Singh. Singh was there for more than two hours. All through, the questioning was done by an inspector, although a DSP was present. It was the inspector who told N. K. Singh that he was under arrest but he could be released on a personal bond. The case against N. K. Singh was under IPC 363, 342, 506 and 120B, charging abduction, threat to life, wrongful confinement and conspiracy: all this in order to "pressurise" Ramchandra to give false evidence against Sanjay Gandhi. N. K. Singh, of course, considers this totally false allegation.

After Bhajan Lal became the Congress (I) CM of Haryana, the SHO of Gurgaon was changed, and this old case, considered dead, was revived. The effort was clearly to pressurise Singh. Singh also expressed his surprise about the fact that "this is the first time that an officer who investigated a case and is still handling it on a day to day basis has been arrested while the case is being actively heard by the Supreme Court".

Parliament was sitting on this day of Singh's arrest, and predictably the Opposition raised the matter in the house. Realising the gravity, the Centre tried to disassociate itself from arrest of N. K. Singh. A news agency even sent out the story that Mrs Gandhi had tried to prevent the arrest of N. K. Singh. But then, who ordered the Haryana police to behave as they did. Was there some more



N. K. Singh, DIG, CBI

sinister intention? Did the Haryana police want to whisk away N. K. Singh quietly?

After his arrest and release on personal bond on January 29, Mr N. K. Singh, DIG, CBI has asked for protection because he feels that his life is in danger. In this context he has written identical letters to the Home Secretary, Secretary Personnel and the director of CBI. According to

reliable sources Mr Singh has written that the design behind his arrest was sinister one and that had it not been for the presence of Press reporters he would have come to grave physical harm in Gurgaon.

January 30 was Martyr's Day, and the country observed silence for two minutes at 11 am in memory of the Mahatma. Just after this, officers of the CBI, in a most unusual display of anger, demonstrated at Sardar Patel Bhawan, to protest against what had happened to N. K. Singh. They wanted to meet Mr Bawa, the new director, to voice their protest. When they reached Sardar Patel Bhawan, Mr Bawa was not there, but two senior officers told the agitated CBI officers to submit a memorandum which would be handed over to the director. Seventy officers signed. Mr Bawa himself is very popular in his organisation, and he was able to defuse the situation with tact. But he had to hear his officers out, and he heard a very angry lot in a conference that evening at five pm. Such discontent in the CBI has never been witnessed.

The N. K. Singh case, more than anything else, has done a great deal to revive fears among those who feel that Mrs Gandhi's Government will be vindictive. There was clearly a lot that was unsavoury in the whole affair, and one can only look askance at some of the explanations being provided for what happened.

What does the law say?

K. K. SINGHVI, senior counsel of the Bombay High Court and Supreme Court and the president of the All India Guild of Law Graduates says, "The situation is confusing because of conflicting statements made in Parliament and outside. In Parliament the Union Home Minister said it was not an "arrest". If so, then why was Mr N. K. Singh taken away and later released on a personal bond? He did not go to Gurgaon on his own volition. On the other hand, according to the Haryana police, Mr Singh was "arrested" for a cognisable offence. In the case of a cognisable offence any police official can arrest any person without a warrant from a magistrate. According to the Haryana police a complaint had been filed against Mr Singh two years ago. But a senior officer had gone into the matter and found nothing improper. The case was reopened. So if they wanted to arrest him considering that he was a very senior police official himself, the Haryana police could have got in touch with their Delhi counterparts who could have sounded Mr Singh about his impending arrest and then arrested him. The true position seems to be that they wanted to take him away but not arrest him like wanting to strike to wound but not to kill. The arrest was made in a very unseemly manner. I

feel the arrest was not proper specially since it was not a serious offence. Such action demoralises the forces and the bureaucracy. If they are constantly in danger of being whisked away it will reflect on their work and the people will be the sufferers. I think there is no difference in law between the words arrest, apprehend or retaken. They are synonymous and the authorities are just quibbling with words now.

Said A. G. Noorani, a legal expert: "I think the very fact that the Government of Haryana and the Government of India have prevaricated and contradicted themselves and each other about the arrest of Mr N. K. Singh, shows that they are conscious about its utter illegality. To say he was summoned for interrogation is meaningless in view of the fact that he was taken away from his house in the early hours of the morning, forcibly, without a proper order. This is absolutely illegal and a violation of a citizen's fundamental right to personal liberty. Any interrogation after this act makes the interrogation also a wholly illegal affair. The whole incident is nothing short of arbitrariness. It's a highhanded action and an outrage to the law".

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

Brutality at Narainpur

Like Belchi, it has become a symbol of national shame



Villagers of Narainpur

ARMED police power was let loose on unarmed illiterate villagers—mostly women—of Narainpur village in Deoria district of UP. If Mohan Singh, a UP Cabinet Minister, had not visited Narainpur and narrated the sordid story to reporters from Gorakhpur, the world may never have come to know about it. As days passed by the most important issue at stake, police excesses on innocent villagers, was forgotten and politicians monopolised the debate to suit their own ends.

On January 11, at about seven o'clock in the morning, a group of women were returning home from the fields. On their way to the village they had to cross the pucca road. While they were crossing it they saw a bus (belonging to the Gupta Bus Service) coming in their direction. The younger women hastily managed to get off the road but 65-year-old Baskali could not. The bus knocked her down and she died on the spot. The errant driver fled. An hour later another bus belonging to the same firm approached the village and this time the angry villagers stopped the bus and demanded compensation. The driver promised to report the matter to the proprietors of the bus service.

Baskali died at seven a.m. and the police reached the village at nine p.m. The SO of Captaingunj police

station asked the villagers to pay for the old woman's cremation. But as money could not be collected, on January 12 the dead woman's son-in-law threw the corpse into the canal.

Baskali looked after her orphaned grandchildren; a girl and a boy. The villagers were now faced with a problem: who would look after them? How would they subsist? The owner of the Gupta Bus Service hadn't as yet said a word about compensation. On the morning of January 14, the villagers stopped another bus and enquired about the promised compensation. The driver said that the compensation money had already been paid to the thana. The enraged villagers requested the driver to ask the owner, Guptaji, to immediately come to the village. Instead of calling Guptaji, the driver went to the thana and informed the SO, Lakshminarayan Chaubey, who immediately rushed to the village with four policemen. In the meantime, the village elders had assembled.

Narainpur's secular spirit is well known in the region. Muslim weavers constitute the largest segment of the population. In addition, there are the brahmins, the potters and washermen. As soon as the SO reached the village, he caught hold of a man called Tahir and gave him a sound beating. When the local imam tried to intervene, he too was beaten

up. The small crowd became restless and, to add to the confusion, Chaubey fired a couple of shots in the air. Two policemen, Sheopujan and Akbar, who were abusing, began beating up the people around them. They were in turn slapped hard by local youths. Some elders asked the SO to sit down on a cot and speak to the villagers. As the SO did this his policemen thought that Chaubey had fallen on the ground. One policeman rushed to the thana and returned with a jeepload of colleagues. Anticipating trouble, they fired in the air as they approached the village and the villagers panicked. Eventually, Chaubey raised his hands and the firing stopped.

Chaubey told the villagers that Guptaji had not paid a single paisa to the thana. "I will go and call Guptaji", he told the villagers and left. The policemen remained behind. The police established wireless contact with the SO of Hata and Ramkola, SDO, Hata, the SO of Padrauna and the local MLA, Banke Lal, who immediately reached the village. A truckload of policemen from the 17 Provincial Armed Constabulary arrived along with them. The police officers asked the villagers to come to the thana to settle their claims. The villagers refused point blank. On Banke Lal's request Makhmal Shaikh, Habib Khan, Shamsul Juha, Atik, Chandi Pandey, Vakil Khan, Tahir, Iftikhar and Abdul Sattar, along with the deceased woman's grandchildren, started for Hata where a panchayat was to be called. At Hata they were taken to the tehsil which is very close to the thana. The villagers demanded Rs 10,000 but Rs 5,000 was finally agreed upon as compensation. It was also decided that the villagers would raise another Rs 3,000 through donations. The agreement was put down on a piece of paper and signatures were duly affixed. Sunset was approaching and the villagers were asked to wait for signing another document. Suddenly, these villagers from Narainpur were surrounded by policemen from Hata and Captaingunj and locked up in a room. Then the beating began in earnest. They were kicked and slapped brutally. Some were also beaten up with police batons. At 9 p.m. these villagers were taken to Captaingunj police station by bus.

The news of the beating reached Narainpur. At 11 p.m., four truckloads of policemen reached Narainpur where about 300 PAC men were already there. To the east of the village live poor Muslims and they were the first to be attacked. Policemen broke open their doors and looted the houses. There was total pande-

S. ALBA

monium. Women were molested by the score. The first house to be attacked was Mohd. Yaqub's. His sons work in a colliery in Burdwan and they had sent Rs 5,000 home for buying land. The policemen took away this money by force. Yaqub's two daughters-in-law were molested despite the protests of Yaqub's wife. The policemen also entered the homes of Ayub Shah, Iqbal Hussain and Manzur Shah. They were beaten up and the police decamped with their valuables. The policemen also took away Rs 1,975 from Kamtusana, a vendor. Three-year-old Sanzeh kept sobbing and repeating to this reporter how the policemen broke the door of his house and beat up his mother.

Thirty-year-old Julekha was alone in her house. They took away her jewellery and beat her up with shoes and batons and did not leave her till she fainted. Ramzan escaped but they caught his 70-year-old father and beat him up till he was on the point of death. Nakhina, a widow, had sold her goat for Rs 100 for her son's marriage and also bought a few utensils. Everything was looted. Amjad Ali, Ishaque, Chokar, Munib—the list of those who were brutally beaten and whose houses were looted, goes on and on.

Rambhavan Kumhar's wife, Phulpati said: "The door was broken down. The men had fled. They came and defiled us. In the end, I went outside and sat down". Shivsharan Dhobi was taken away. He had saved Rs 2,000 for the marriage of his daughter, Prabhahati. His elder daughter, Lalita, and his daughter-in-law were molested. Azima said that her daughter and her daughter-in-law were abused in the foulest language by the police. They tore the saris of the women and took away their ornaments. Isharuddin Nishaa who had been married recently and had come to visit her parents, had brought along with her two suitcases full of clothes and ornaments. These were snatched away from her. She was also harassed by the police. Sumari, an old woman, had her hand broken by the butt of a gun. The atrocities continued till two in the morning. By this time the villagers had fled, and the police finding the houses empty, took all they could find. However, two houses were not touched, as they were believed to be of police informers.

All those who had been imprisoned in the police station were also beaten up. The beards of Munawar, Shamim, Maqbool and Mehdi Hasan were pulled out. The moustache of Shamsul Julaha was also pulled out. The *chotis* (brahminical tuft of hair at the back of the head) of Algu Barhai, Baijnath Lohar and Bishan Deo were torn out. Chandi Pandey and Lalan Pandey were almost made to drink urine. Qutbuddin's leg was broken. On January 16, Lalan Pandey was arrested while he was on duty. His ring and Rs 307 were taken away from him when he was taken to the police station. He was forced to lie on the floor of the record room of the police station and was beaten



Banskali's grandchildren

up with shoes every 30 minutes. When he wanted water he was given urine. His *choti* was also pulled out. In the bazaar policeman Jhanku Tiwari ordered him to spit on the ground and lick that up. Again, when he asked for water he was given a cup of hot tea and told to drink it in one gulp. The villagers still shudder when they speak of the brutality.

The men refuse to talk about what happened to the women but say things happened that they cannot even bear to talk about. A man who took one reporter to meet some of the women who were molested and raped said that over a hundred unmarried girls had been molested, two had been so humiliated that they had not yet returned to the village. The women say only, "We are telling you that we have lost everything, what more do you want to know. Do you think that because you wear decent clothes only you have any *izzat*". It is difficult to establish whether there was mass rape but it is clear that there was mass molestation. No amount of commissions of enquiry will be able to find out because very few women would get up publicly and say that they or their daughters were, in fact, raped.

The wife of Gannu, a harijan, died due to severe beating but everyone was made to believe that she had died of cold. On January 20, Juminan Khan also died of the same cause. On the night of January 14 Muhammad Yunus returned to the village to find that he was the only man in Narainpur village. On January 15, principal Lalita Pandey arrived there, consoled the women and sent out the news of the happenings but no newspapers carried it. No prayers had taken place in the village mosque for two days so the muezzin was asked to call everyone for prayers. Muhammad Yunus tried to persuade the people who had fled to return but no one turned up even after eight days. The PAC personnel who were posted

in the village took chicken belonging to the villagers and ate them. The villagers said that some anti social elements came along with the police and looted the houses.

The 26 villagers who had been imprisoned in Kasaya jail were told by the jailor that they would be handcuffed and shackled if they did not pay him Rs 25. Since Sher Mehmood, Mahboob, Algu and Atik did not have any money they were put in chains. The villagers were all praise for the district magistrate Khurshid Ahmed and Ashok Priyadarshi who had talked to the villagers. Till the time of writing Mr Ahmed had arranged for Rs 25,000 compensation for the villagers. Jai-prakash and Sunkesia, the grandchildren of Banskali received Rs 9,000 for their upkeep. The district administration has promised Rs 500 for all those who went to jail.

This was the incident. The villagers paid dearly for slapping two policemen. The brutality was committed by two police station in-charges and their men. At that time the DM and even the superintendent of police were on leave. When the DM came back he asked the SP to suspend all the police officers who were involved but the SP turned a deaf ear to this. On February 5, DIG Tingle told the other police officers among whom was the new SP, Bansal, that the district administration was trying to provoke the villagers by giving them monetary aid. This should not worry the police, he assured the others.

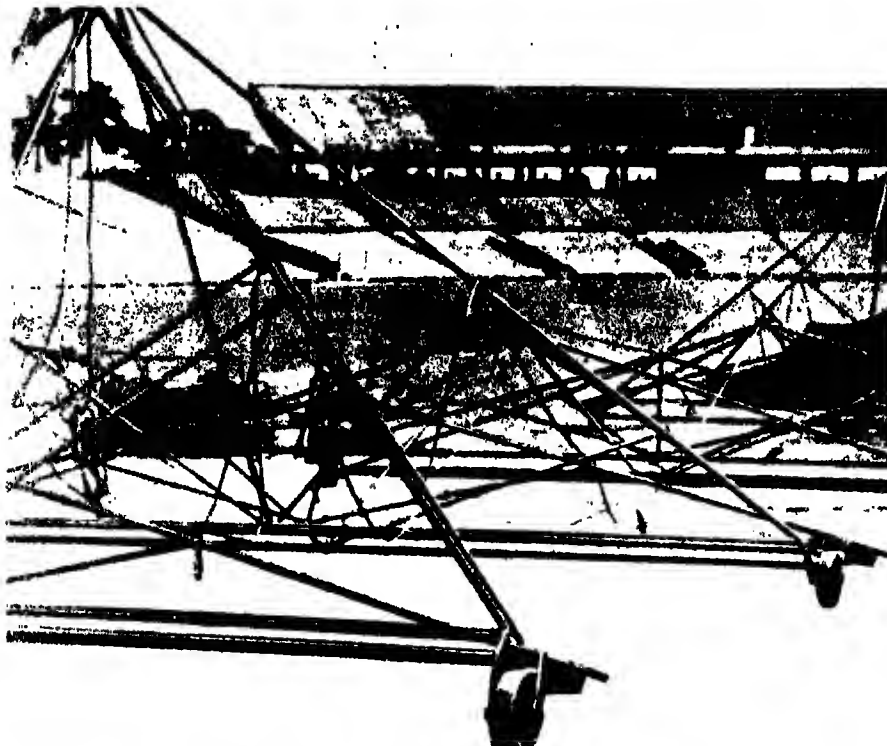
The Minister from Deoria, Mohan Singh, brought the incident to public notice since the administration had failed to take action against the errant police personnel. On the other hand, the local MLA, Banke Lal, did not even cooperate with the people. The efforts of Mohan Singh have got entangled in politics. The Congress (I) has made political capital out of the incident and the State Government and the Centre are at loggerhead over the issue. When the Assembly is dissolved Narainpur will become an issue in the next polls. At present Narainpur has become a place of pilgrimage for the leaders. Apart from the Ministers a parliamentary committee has already visited Narainpur. Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi, have made separate personal visits. But what have the villagers got in return? No one has spoken out against a system that has created such a notorious force as the UP PAC which must by now have its hands totally gory with its many excesses.

Meanwhile, the station officer of Hata, Indrasan Singh, and the SO Captaingunj, Lakshminarayan Chaudhary, have been suspended. The SP has already been transferred. But this is no punishment since any police officer can regain his old post after a period of about three months. The constables of the two police stations have also been suspended.

SANTOSH BHARTIYA, Lucknow

Pitching them up to the CAB

Eden Gardens gets a unique cover for its pitch



IN the period between September 1979 and February 1980, India has played two Test series at home, but one important fact has gone unnoticed, that Calcutta has notched up another "first" in the cricketing world. The series against Kim Hughes' Australians was the first "monsoon series" that India played at home. But as luck would have it, the Calcutta Test in late October was played in a "dry week". So the collapsible pitch cover, specially designed by a Calcuttan for that Test, went unused, although the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) claims that it is the first of its kind in the world.

Mr Jagmohan Dalmia, treasurer, CAB, said that the pitch cover which spreads right from the High Court End up to the Pavilion End will eliminate any discrimination between the batsman and bowler. "For the first time in cricketing history". Not only will the wicket now be covered, but a fast bowler's entire run-up, as well. Lord's has a cover which is 106 feet long, covering the pitch and part of the playing area. The Calcutta cover measures 450 feet by 15 feet—more than four times the one at Lord's.

Another significant point about this cover is its time-saving ability. Covering the pitch is normally a tedious process, but the new collapsi-

ble cover can be laid out in just ten minutes. To fold back its entire 450 feet length after use takes 45 minutes. The Eden Gardens previously had rigid frame covers, measuring 10 feet by 15 feet, but the units required about eight people to carry them to the pitch one at a time. The CAB, therefore, approached Mr. Dilip K. Das of D. Das and Associates and explained that they needed a collapsible cover which would occupy only about 30 feet of space behind the High Court End, would be fast to operate, and would cover the bowlers' run-ups at both ends.

According to an insider, however, a cover with the dimensions 110 feet by 14 feet (or one of the three sections—150 feet—of the present one) would have been more than adequate, but "a CAB brainwave" resulted in a desire to cover the entire length from end to end, which was described as "bloody foolish". What they ended up with is something which is not only "ridiculously expensive", but also "unweildy and unnecessary". A case of enthusiasm gone overboard.

Mr Das, commenting upon the unusual length of the cover, confirmed it was easy to spread, but not as smooth to pull back. It was to make things easier that the cover was made in three sections, each of 150 feet length: "They can use only one cover, bringing out the other two

only if really necessary," he said. Explaining the principle of the system, Mr Das said: "It works on the same principle of the concertina bellows—except that there is no music here, of course!" The framework is made of special steel tubes over which chemically treated canvas is spread. The structure is painted white with non-glazed paint and is run on ball bearings with 66 rubber wheels. Each triangular bit is hinged on either side, and it folds inwards from the lower portion. The stretch is controlled by nylon cords. The total cost of this pitch cover, inclusive of designing, was approximately Rs. 70,000.

About a month before the Test against Australia in Calcutta last year, the CAB approached D. Das & Associates, and Sekhar Iron Works Pvt. Ltd. (one of the latter's clients) who undertook the manufacture. Designed as "a spot job" in a single day by Mr Das, it took about three weeks to manufacture, and was delivered to CAB four days ahead of schedule on October 26, 1979. "It was brought to the ground totally untried," said Mr Das, "and being an experiment, we were all apprehensive." The rains didn't come, but the operation of the cover was easily mastered by the groundsmen when they spread the covers after the end of the day's play.

It didn't rain during the Test in Calcutta against Pakistan either; did it disappoint Mr Das that his brainchild has remained untested? "To stop the rain from seeping into the ground is the job of the tarpaulin covers which the CAB bought themselves. But as far as my job is concerned, we found that it was okay. I only wonder what will happen if there are gusty winds. You see we couldn't make it too heavy or it would cause dents on the ground and damage it; yet, it had to be heavy enough not to be blown away by stormy winds. The cover stands on its own weight. But then," he smiled, "even proper houses get blown away, so what's a pitch cover?"

One might also mention the Rs. 6 lakh drainage system which the Eden Gardens has now devised with the help of the PWD—another unique achievement. A circular trench around the pitch containing glazed pipes, and covered with a thin layer of grass above, can pump out water through radially connected subsidiary pipes, leading to deep drains all around the boundary line.

All this makes Eden Gardens as rain-proof as an Englishman in a hat, raincoat and gumboots. Apart from the fact that rain can no longer ruin matches at Calcutta, the local cricketing season itself can now be advanced by about a month, giving Bengal a better chance to have more tournaments and thus throw up better cricketing talent than it has so far.

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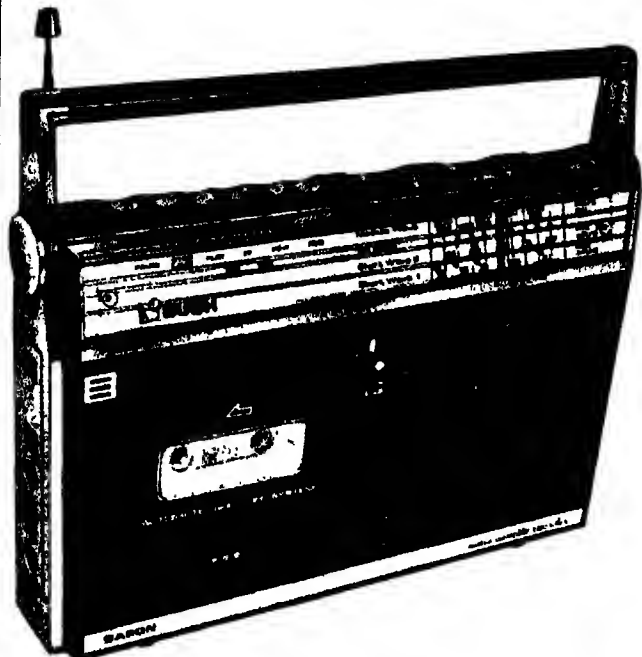


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The hunt is on

For the Indian Jack the Ripper



Vasanti's blood-stained bed

SOMEWHERE—which could be anywhere in the world—a possible mass murderer is (so far successfully) in hiding. His tally thus far is: one young woman and a middle aged man, a young girl half paralysed and dying. He may have also murdered two of his wives, both sisters. Their life insurance policies for Rs 20,000 each were retrieved from his bags, after he gave Goa police the slip. Who he is, no one knows for sure. He was known in Goa as Dr Ashok Purandhare, a name police now suspect he may have assumed to suggest a possible linkage with the well known Purandhare family from Bombay, who have a well-known gynaecological nursing home along Bombay's elite Marine Drive. He may also be P. K. Sharma, an absconder and murder-suspect from the Union Territory of Delhi. P. K. Sharma was once allegedly the medical officer DTC (Delhi Transport Corporation). Ashok Purandhare claimed to be an MBBS, DGO, DMC.

Purandhare—or whoever—disappeared from Panaji on the morning of January 1, 1980, as swiftly and unnoticed as he had first come into the town. Goa police have been looking for him ever since, so far (till January 10) with no encouraging results. On that day, police picked up one dead girl and two dying persons from Panaji's rowdy "El Dorado" neighbourhood, a floor above PFI's Goa office. Of the then dying—and now already dead—one was J. Renjen—a sleek but slimy character whose real identity and business remain a

puzzle, even after his death. So is his real financial standing. J. Renjen has on the outer door of the building a handwritten notice reading "J. Renjen—Minishop Departmental Store; Premier Elec. Industries, A to Z emporium; JR Enterprises". Across the road he ran an establishment with a signboard which described him as "Contractors and Suppliers". On the river front he ran "Panjim Clinic"—a place police say thrived on abortions, some of which ended in deaths. It is also a dormitory for "Tibetan"—but, in fact, Nepalese—young girls who peddle woollens during the day.

Anyway, Purandhare was the "surgeon" in attendance at the "nursing home". A local radiologist Dr Agnel Dias, who owns the building where

Renjen being taken to hospital



the clinic functions, had taken Renjen to Court for default of rent for as much as a lakh of rupees and had succeeded in getting Renjen's passport impounded. Dias believes Renjen's contacts with the police were unbeatable—one of whom is said to be an IPS Officer, presently posted as an Assistant Director with the CBI. It is probably true that despite the Court order impounding Renjen's passport he did travel abroad.

Police theorise that Purandhare owned Renjen money—somewhere around Rs 15,000. Renjen's "Minishop" has a reputation for fake imported goods. A floor below PFI's office the courtyard is littered with labels of Indian textiles cut off from the original fabrics which are later, allegedly, relabelled as "imported" and sold to unsuspecting tourists. Police also "now suspect" that Renjen pilled young nurses and doctors with drugs and used them sexually or shared them with VIP friends.

Renjen was a much married man. He once styled himself as a doctor and rumour has it that his activity as an ENT specialist came to an end after the death of a patient whose tonsils were excised. Renjen's second wife is a qualified doctor who suddenly left Goa for the Gulf, after a case at the Panjim Clinic over a fatally "induced birth" case.

On New Year's dawn, a man called Alex and a prostitute operating in the area reportedly heard screams from Renjen's house. They saw Purandhare coming out. He allegedly told them that the girls were panicky over a rat they had seen. They tried to stop him and hinted that they would call the police and Purandhare told them to do so and coolly walked away. That was at around 5.15 am. Police came in at 6 am and broke open Renjen's door only after 9 am, by which time Vasanti, one of the girls was dead. Renjen died two days later. The other victims, a young shop assistant, Regina is in hospital half paralysed and in coma. They had all been hit on the head with a sharp weapon and stabbed. While searching the room, police found the insurance policies taken by Purandhare on his two dead wives—one had died about three weeks before the Renjen incident. The dead women were sisters. Ashok certified that his own wife had died due to a fall sustained in a epileptic fit. Vasanti, the murdered maid, is believed to have been a witness to the "fall". All is quiet presently in Renjen's Minishop. Two of his widows now live in it, along with Renjen's sons.

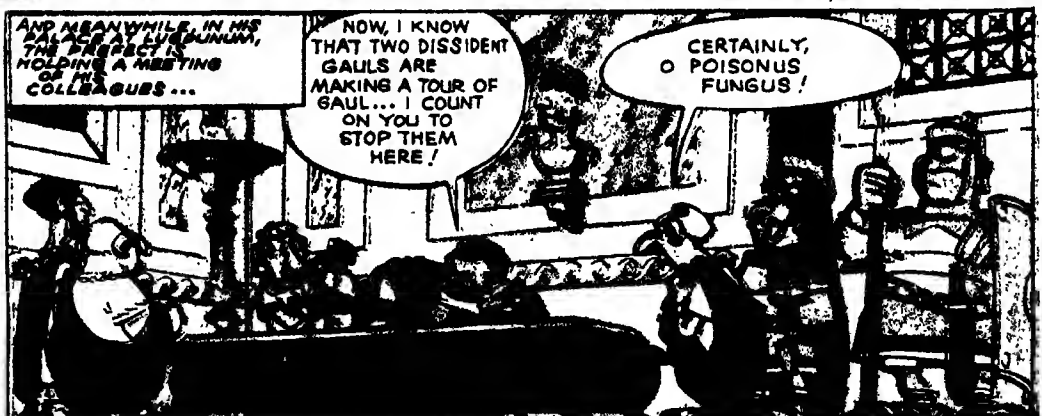
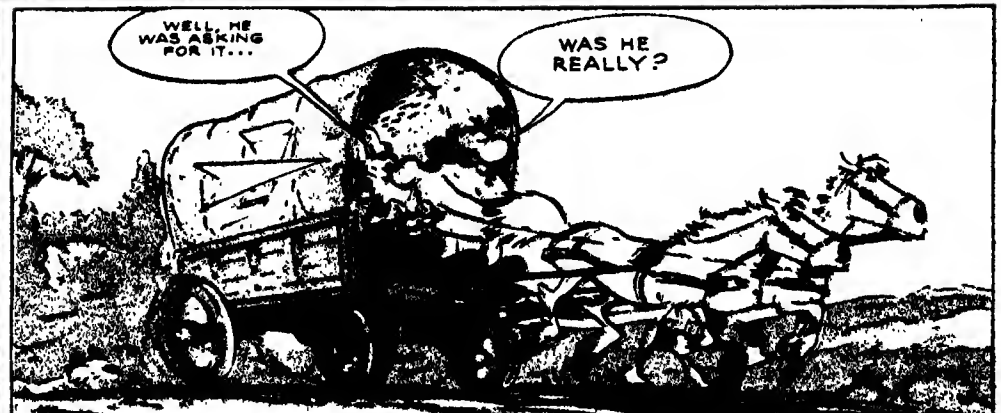
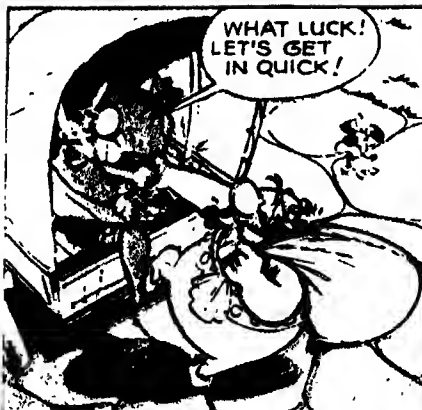
The IG of police, Prakash Singh, says it is no secret that Renjen's business included smuggling and abortions. It is no secret, either, that some senior police officers had been seen in Renjen's company sharing his lavish hospitality. As for Purandhare, his many aliases are just pouring in. He has a past record in Delhi—and four deaths, so far, in Goa which his presence would help to clear.

MARIO CABRAL E SA, Goa



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All you do is have fun!

Part I: We've given you 6 illustrations, each associated with a particular country. Just identify these countries. Easy? To make it simpler still, we've given you two alternatives in each case. Tick the one you feel is correct. As an example, we've already given you the first answer!

Part II: Write an interesting caption to the photograph of the Sheikh sitting on a camel. Try and capture the mood of the picture and link it with 'V.I.P.' luggage. The line should be in English (you may add a foreign phrase if you wish) and should not be longer than 15 words.

One...two...three...GO!
Here are 3 points you may want to keep in mind. Read them. And then go ahead and write the winning caption.

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2 There are over 300 items of 'V.I.P.' luggage. In 12 lovely colours.

3 'V.I.P.' luggage is made of tough polymer with sturdy chrome channels and high-impact locks.

Important! Every entry must be accompanied by a cash memo for any item of 'V.I.P.' luggage purchased on or after 1st February 1980.

Prices of 'V.I.P.' luggage range from Rs. 125 to Rs. 560.

Last Date for entries is 31st March 1980.

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Laying Down The Rules!

1. The contest is open to all Indian citizens residing in India, except the employees of Blow Plast Limited, Aristo Plast Limited, Sista's Private Limited and their families.

2. You can send in as many entries as you like, but each entry must be accompanied by a cash memo for any item of 'V.I.P.' luggage purchased on or after 1st February 1980. The luggage may be from either the 'V.I.P.' Classic or 'V.I.P.' Travelite ranges.

3. All entries must be submitted only on "We'll give you the World!" Contest Entry Forms, which are available at all 'V.I.P.' dealers, or on the Entry Form in this advertisement.

4. Fill in your full name, address and the caption in capitals, in English.

5. Superscribe "We'll give you the World!" Contest clearly on the envelope and mail your Entry Form to Blow Plast Limited, P.O. Box 9145, Bombay 400 025.

6. All entries must arrive on or before 31st March 1980.

7. We undertake no responsibility for any entries lost, delayed or damaged in transit.

8. Entries must be sent by ordinary post only, NOT by hand delivery or registered post.

9. All entries become the property of the Company.

10. All prizes are subject to Indian Tax Laws wherever applicable. Winners will have to make their own arrangements for passports, visas and eligibility for foreign travel.

11. Illegible or incomplete entries become invalid.

12. Judging of entries will be done by an independent panel.

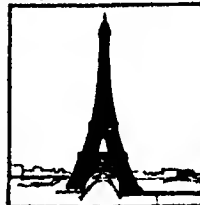
The judges' decision will be final and binding, and no correspondence will be entertained. The winners will be those who have selected the correct answers and whose caption is judged to be the best. All winners will be notified by post. The names of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize winners will be announced in the Press.

13. All tours announced in this Contest are in the form of Package Tours organised by SOTC Travels & Tours in cooperation with Air-India and are subject to the rules and regulations of such tours.

14. All tours proceeding out of India are subject to the rules and regulations of the Reserve Bank of India and will operate as per the prevailing regulations and permissions being granted for the operation of such tours.

ENTRY FORM: "WE'LL GIVE YOU THE WORLD!" Contest

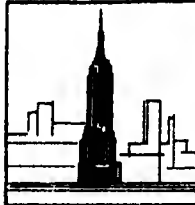
PART I:



☒ France
☐ Italy



☐ Russia
☐ Turkey



☐ Britain
☐ U.S.A.



☐ Netherlands
☐ Denmark



☐ Philippines
☐ Thailand



☐ Egypt
☐ Greece

FILL THIS IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Name: _____

Address: _____

State: _____

I agree to abide by the rules of this Contest.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PART II:



Caption: _____

(Write in English, in not more than 15 words. The caption must mention the name 'V.I.P.')

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Sex books: A feminist viewpoint

By Dr MALA SHELLEY

IHAVE been reading of late some 'phoren' (mostly English), sex-manuals handed to me by a well-meaning friend. His idea were to introduce some such "things" in the Indian languages. Being a doctor (though not a sexologist: a particular breed whose *raison d'être* I am yet to comprehend!) he thought I would perhaps be able to provide guidance as to how best an internationalisation of habits could thus be achieved.

I don't doubt the honesty of his purpose but what surprised me was the blatant banality of these manuals. Neither titillation nor knowledge, the only tangible result of reading those books was an unmitigated boredom. The authors could have done better to write about how to straighten the fouled knot of a pyjama-string. The photographs were really kitsch to the 'n' point: The performers looked like bedraggled crows with genitals looking as unphysiological as in the sculpture at the island of Delos! No unconventionality either because neither flagellation nor oral sex could possibly surprise Indians of today.

One author praised the incest between a middle-aged mother with her two teen-aged sons, who later bestowed the favour to their sisters. This was new to me, but that's all! Another was more research-oriented. The author made an elaborate study of the quantum of ejaculations (measured in teaspoonfuls) in scientifically selected subjects, which included himself. Like Dr John Kunter, who would contract VD from time to time to study its clinical spectrum.

Some of the authors were medical men. But that did not make things better by way of eliminating a pseudo-smart journalese and substitute authenticity instead. It appears that the authors are convinced that the history of sex started with IUD, pills and vibrators, those over-rated artifacts of an ephemeral sex-culture. Have they ever read what our Sanskrit poets (or for that matter their "gaon-wallahs" like Ovid and Byron) have managed to achieve without them. In their futile bid to achieve an objective enlightenment they missed out on what I think is the "essence" of sex (as understood by someone, who never made love hanging from the chandelier or perilously on the marble-top of the kitchen-table; that is, of course, *dérigeur* nowadays!)

Sex is always "raw, primitive strong-flavoured" (Bradshaw) like shikh-kabab! For these authors however it



is as bland as Kanji, my unfavourite but otherwise a substantial item. In spite of all this blah, blah, one should not forget that coitus is meant to procreate. If not a nature's ruse, orgasm is surely a spin-off, which we homosapiens have intellectualised and quite rightly at that. We do not know if the she-goat gets a clitoral or vulval orgasm, or if at all, but then she does her job all right.

Thirdly, the so-called communication in sex (D. H. Lawrence "silent talk of the souls") can really not happen without love, though making love is a euphemism for that four-letter word, which the editor would not allow me to write. And the love

that finds the deepest expression in the juxtaposition of two bodies is very ill-at-ease outside a permanent wedlock. If someone thinks I am bluffing I could quote sociologists, and young ones at that to convince my young friends.

Finally there is always something ineffable in sexual union. Call it God, call it mystique but that it exists, is certain. Does not a full sexual union provide the most authentic spiritual experience by thrusting us into eternity in one movement and bringing us back in the other hitting earth, clutching the intolerable muck of it and ourselves with the passion-steel of our fingers? Sexologists pathetically miss out on that. They hardly mention (or even try to) sexuality as a logos. What instead they churn out (in spite of their sure-success tips on clitoral orgasm) is a pathetic and priggish (?) Victorian attitude to sex. They consider it a thing apart but not as Byron would have it, the whole existence.

To cock a snook at these sexologists, I quote two passages translated from Sanskrit. In fact I would throw all these sex-manuals to read again, what I hope will live long enough to impress on my grandchildren. Let us hear from Joydeva:

"I shall coo with the notes of cuckoo

He will surpass the directions given in the erotic books;

Flowers in my hair will fall and my clignon will come loose,

He will mark my heavy and full breasts with nails".

Compare today's "...gripping the head of your man's penis gently with your thumb and forefinger..."

Did our ancestors really not know of sex? Or only some of them did not? Or could it be that some of us even now do not know its depth and texture? Take another example from a woman poet writing in Sanskrit (6th century AD)

"Stole he my maidenhead, and today's husband he

Just the same are nights of spring. Blossoming malati, cadamba's pollen bloom

Scent the self-same heavy breeze; Ah, on that very spot for coitus-fantasies

Wistful, wistful grows the heart".

Compare today's: "With your thumb on your woman's clitoris and the index and forefinger actually in the vagina and no sharp finger-nails mind..."

Which betrays the illiterate? The shikh-kabab of Sanskrit? Or the Kanji in English? You tell me. ■

The day of the long night

M. P. RAO explains how the total solar eclipse will take place

THE day the sky went dark, they prayed. They went down on their knees and prayed to be delivered from the terror that they thought had begun to threaten them. No one could understand why the sun should disappear, portion by portion until there was very little light left. And while they shivered in apprehension, the children clung to their mothers in terror, but there was no one to calm their fears, for even the wise elders did not know what was happening. Then, as if nothing at all had occurred, the sun began to reappear after a short interval and with the light, life returned to normal. Those who underwent the ordeal never forgot what they had seen. Sometimes they would look fearfully up into the sky, as if to reassure themselves that the strange monster which had devoured the sun was not about to return.

That was January 1898, the last time a total eclipse of the sun was seen in India. Now, 82 years and 25 days later everyone — well, almost everyone — is prepared for the next performance. It will be the most spectacular show on earth, but there

will be no tickets sold and every conceivable place will be a grandstand.

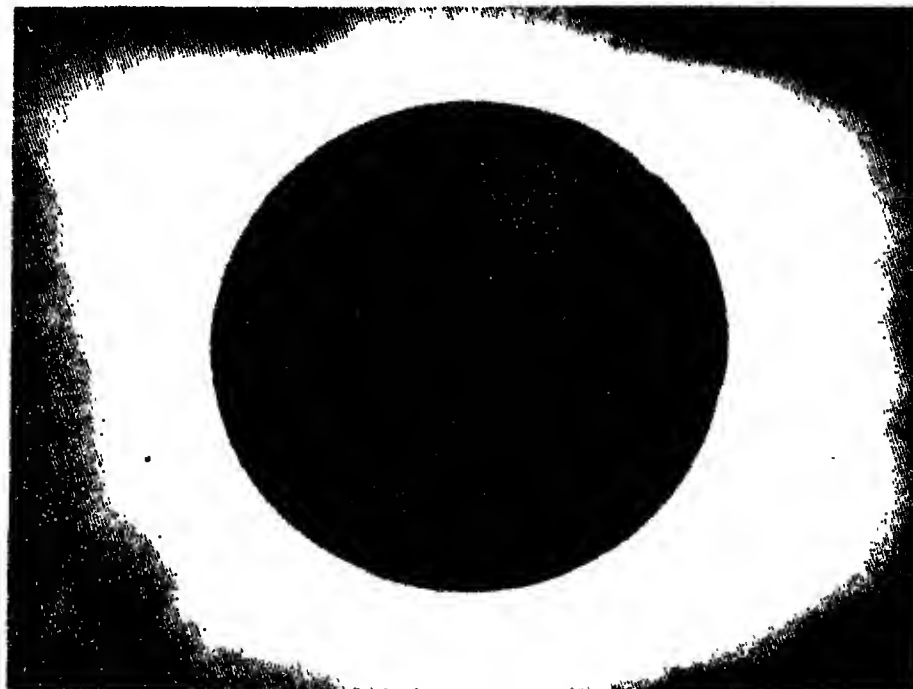
During the eclipse, the path of totality will hit the west coast of India near Karwar, on Saturday February 16, 1980, in the afternoon. The path of totality which is 115 to 150 kms wide in India, sweeps over the heart of India approximately at an angle of 22.5 degrees and emerges into the northern sector of the Bay of Bengal some 40 kms east-northeast of the town of Puri in Orissa, only to re-enter land around Chittagong in Bangladesh. Interestingly, it again passes over Mizoram where the people of the township of Lungleh will have the opportunity of seeing the sun setting over the Lushai hills. (Please see map for towns covered by the totality of the eclipse and the table for timings of the eclipse, total or partial at different places in India.) At other places, north and south of the band of totality, the eclipse will be seen as "partial" right from the northern tip of Kashmir to the Southern tip of Kanyakumari, including Sri Lanka, of course.

There must be a few elderly peo-

ple still living in our country who saw the previous total eclipse, whose path of totality started around Ratnagiri on the west coast and after spanning the then Bombay Presidency, crossed over the Central Provinces, into Bihar and Sikkim and part of Nepal and ended in China.

The path of totality of the total eclipse of the sun on February 16, 1980, actually starts in the south Atlantic Ocean at a point 14.3 degrees W Longitude, 10.3 degrees S Latitude. After crossing the heart of the African States of Congo, Zaire, Kenya and Zambia, the shadow of the moon dips into the Arabian Sea (the totality is maximum on the east coast of Africa, at 4 minutes and 12 seconds) and traverses the Arabian Sea to enter the Indian coast where the duration of totality is maximum near Gokarn, where it lasts for 2 min 50 sec.

Fortunately for viewers in India its path of some 1500 kms over the subcontinent (the total path of the eclipse is 14,000 kms) is over fairly thickly populated regions of the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, a very small slice of Madhya Pradesh and a big portion of Orissa and then a small stretch of Mizoram, before it passes into Burma and ends in China.



HOW are solar eclipses caused? Well, as every schoolboy knows, an eclipse of the sun is caused when the shadow of the moon obscures the bright disc of the sun, by the moon coming between the earth and sun in the same straight line. If the moon's orbit were to be in the same plane as the orbit of the earth, an eclipse of the sun should be the rule every New Moon day, which, fortunately is not the case because then it would no longer be a phenomenon. It so happens that the moon's orbit is inclined to that of the earth by 5 degrees 8 minutes, and it is only when the moon's orbit cuts the ecliptic, the point of intersection being called a "node", that an eclipse can occur, be it total, annular or partial.

Now we come to an interesting cosmic coincidence. Our sun's diameter is 864,000 miles and that of our moon is 2160 miles which is almost exactly 1/400th of the sun. The sun's average distance from the earth is 92,957,200 miles and the moon's average distance from the earth 238,840 miles (maximum of

252,700 miles and minimum of 221,460 miles) which is also 1/400th of the distance to the sun. In other words, the size of the apparent disc of the moon is roughly the same as the size of the apparent disc of the sun and under favourable circumstances, it can obscure the sun completely as seen by an observer from the earth, resulting in a total eclipse of the sun. Actually, due to the orbital motion of the earth around the sun, which is elliptical, the sun's angular diameter varies from 32 minutes 35 seconds to 31 minutes 31 seconds of arc and that of our moon between 33 minutes 31 seconds to 29 minutes 22 seconds of arc. In other words, sometimes, the moon can more than obscure the sun, as will happen on February 16, 1980, when the magnitude of eclipse at some places in India is 1.04 (1.00 means full obscuration).

A maximum of seven eclipses can occur in a year: five solar and two lunar as in 1935; four solar and three lunar as will occur two years hence in 1982 or two in a year when both will be solar as will occur in the present year 1980. The second one this year will be the annular one of August 10, 1980 which will be seen over the mid-Pacific and South America and hence will not be visible in India. In other words, during the current year, there will be no lunar eclipse at all.

A total eclipse of the sun, on an average, is visible from any given place once every 360 years. Total eclipses are not uncommon; in fact they occur every few years but the pity is that their paths lie over inhabitable regions like the Arctic and the deserts or over vast ocean areas. But we in India have been fortunate to see five total eclipses during the last century viz: April 14, 1828, December 20, 1843, August 17, 1868, December 12, 1871 and January 22 1898.

What is so special about a total solar eclipse? Technical and scientific experiments apart, to the common man, it is a breathtaking sight. When the sun is fully covered by the disc of the moon, the "corona", or the so-called atmosphere of the sun, a pearly-white projection surrounding the black moon (in fact the hidden sun) feathery and ethereal, comes into view extending to two or three times the sun's radii. The corona consists of tenuous gas at very high temperatures and is made of an inner portion and an outer one and it is believed to extend even to our earth, though in lesser intensity. But the actual region of the sun which gives heat, light and warmth is however the photosphere of the sun which is visible to us on normal days. The corona can be seen only on total eclipse days. The surface of the moon is uneven as we know and when projected against the sun, sunlight trickles down the valleys on the moon and these light beads are known as Bailey's beads after Francis Bailey who discovered them in 1836.

TABLE I

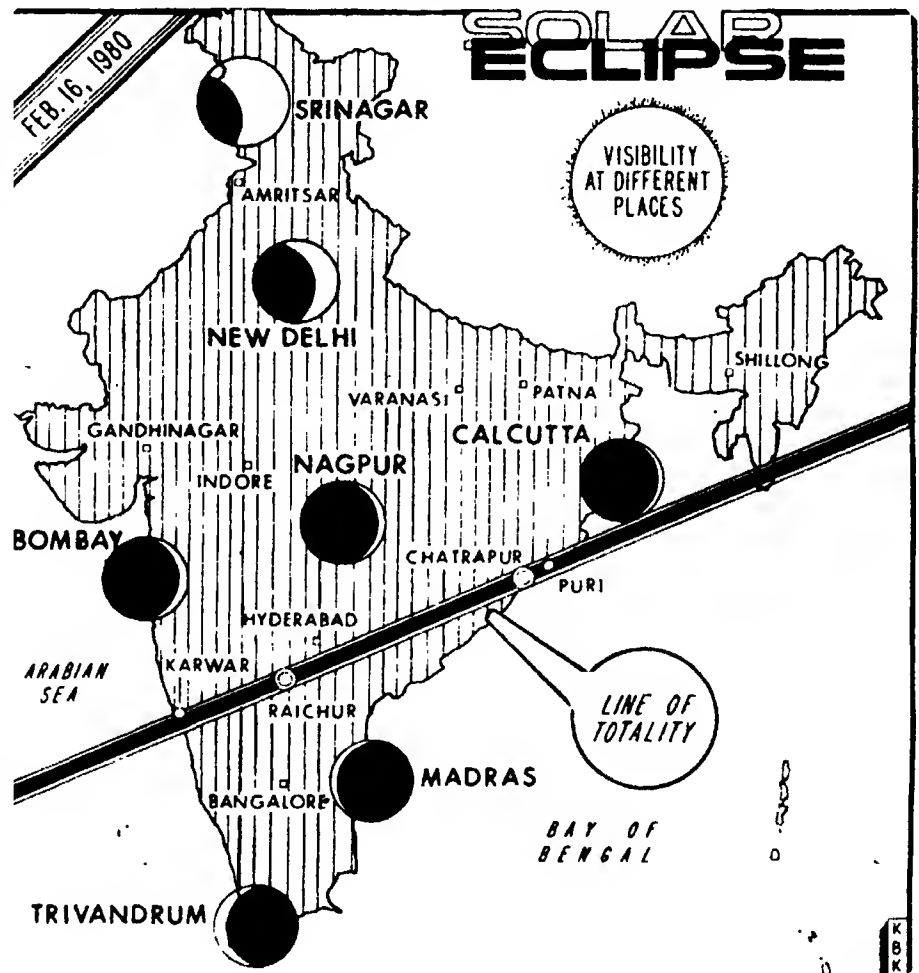
Table giving the timings of the Total Solar Eclipse of February 16, 1980 at some selected places
(Timings are in I.S.T.)

Place	Magnitude	Beginning of Totality			Ending of Totality			Duration of Totality	
		h	m	s	h	m	s	m	s
Karwar	1.01	15	38	35	15	41	17	2	42
Adoni	1.01	15	43	44	15	45	35	1	51
Honavar	1.00	15	38	54	15	41	06	2	12
Gadag	1.02	15	40	54	15	43	42	2	48
Manvi	1.02	15	43	10	15	45	55	2	35
Raichur	1.02	15	43	36	15	46	18	2	42
Khammam	1.02	15	47	30	15	50	00	2	30
Koraput	1.01	15	51	00	15	52	54	1	54
Bhubaneswar	1.00	15	53	54	15	56	12	2	18
Puri	1.01	15	53	54	15	56	12	2	18
Konarak	1.01	15	53	55	15	56	13	2	18

Note:—Magnitude 1.00 means that the Sun's disc is fully covered by the disc of the Moon and when it exceeds this it means, of course that it is more than fully covered. Maximum duration of totality in India is on the west coast near Gokarn, which is 2m 52s.

If the sun shines during a total eclipse, through a particular deep valley, a "diamond ring" effect results, which is rated only next to the corona as far as beauty is concerned. A solar eclipse takes place when the sun moon and the earth come in

one straight line. If the angular diameter of the moon is equal or slightly more than that of the sun, a total eclipse results; and if the moon's disc is smaller than that of the sun due to its greater distance from the earth, an annular eclipse results.



Exciting Biting!



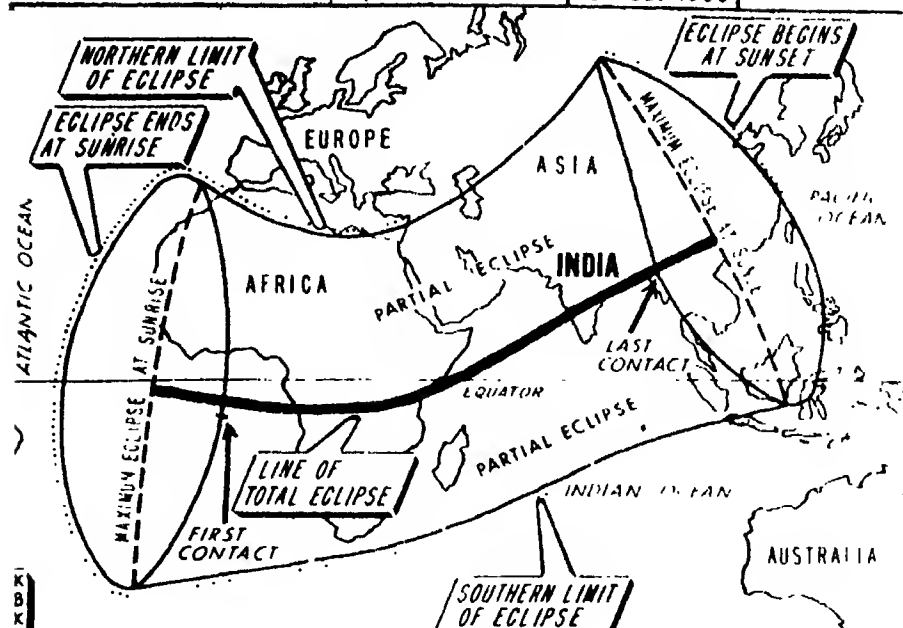
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PATH OF SOLAR ECLIPSE

16 FEB. 1980



This means that the sun shines around the dark smaller disc of the moon like a bright ring. A partial eclipse results when the dark moon is able to obscure only a portion of the disc of the sun. In other words, outside the zone of totality of a solar eclipse, within certain limits, the eclipse is seen as partial. In fact, during the total eclipse of the sun which will take place on February 16, 1980, the eclipse will be seen as partial from 30 degrees W longitude to 120 degrees E longitude from latitude 60 degrees N to latitude 35 degrees—an area which encompasses almost the whole of Africa, Saudi

Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Burma, Malaysia, China, Mongolia and the USSR.

Ancient Babylon was the cradle of astronomy where faithful records of all solar and lunar eclipses were kept. The ancient Chaldeans (2500 B.C.) examined these records and found a periodicity of 18 years and 11-1/3 days (or 18 years and 10-1/3 days if 5 leap years were taken into account) which amounted to 6585.32 days and was called "Saros" by Suida. Any two eclipses of a series, be they lunar or solar, resemble each other so closely that they can be con-

sidered as repetitions of the earlier ones. Thales (624-548 B.C.), a merchant of Miletus in Ionia (modern Greece), who was recognised as the founder of Greek astronomy, successfully predicted the solar eclipse of May 28, 585 B.C. based on the earlier eclipse observed on May 18, 603 B.C., using the Saros method. One of the most important solar eclipses of history is the one which happened during the battle between the Lydians and the Medes. The eclipse so terrified both the armies that they immediately stopped fighting and agreed to peace.

The duration of totality of a solar eclipse can vary from as low a period as 0.3 minutes as happened in 1828 A.D. to as high a figure as 7.5 minutes as happened in 2186 A.D., the latter the longest in the history of the total eclipses of the sun. Long duration eclipses afford astronomers greater opportunities to study the sun, and its surroundings in particular. Now-a-days, it has been possible to prolong the duration of totality by artificial methods. The earth rotates on its axis at the speed of 1040 mph from west to east and the moon's shadow speeds across the surface of the earth also from west to east at the speed of 2100 mph and the effective speed of the shadow of the moon is reduced to 1060 mph (2100 mph minus 1040 mph) which can be easily exceeded by modern supersonic jet aircraft. In other words, by the supersonic plane keeping pace with the shadow of the moon the totality can be prolonged to 80 minutes. During the two total eclipses of the sun on June 30, 1973 and February 26, 1979, supersonic aircraft chased the shadow of the moon and observed the totality for more than 80 minutes and conducted experiments. According to Dr. T. R. Von Oppolzer of the Vienna Academy of Sciences who compiled a list of solar and lunar eclipses in 1881, for the period 1207 B.C. to 2161 A.D., a period of 30 centuries, there will be two more total solar eclipses in India, viz, on October 24, 1995 and another on August 11, 1999.

During the forthcoming total eclipse of February 16, 1980, the sun will be between the constellations of Capricorn and Aquarius and when totally eclipsed, you can see the smallest planet of the solar system, viz. Mercury, some 15 degrees east of the Sun and Venus, the brightest of the planets seen shining a further 21 degrees east, both shining during daytime together with some other stars around the sun.

Total solar eclipses mislead animals and birds. The birds go to roost and animals relax thinking that night has come, but are puzzled by the reappearance of light within a short time. Here, I must remove a misconception from the minds of the public: during a total eclipse of the sun it will be virtually night. It is not so. The light of course will be very much reduced and will be equivalent to that experienced one hour after sunset or one hour before sunrise. ■

TABLE 11

Other important places in India where the Solar Eclipse will be seen as partial (stations alphabetically arranged)

Place	Magnitude	Beginning of Eclipse			Greatest Phase			Ending of Eclipse		
		h	m	s	h	m	s	h	m	s
Ahmedabad	0.75	14	23	00	15	41	12	16	50	30
Bombay	0.87	14	18	42	15	40	06	15	51	42
Bhopal	0.81	14	31	12	15	47	18	16	54	36
Calcutta	0.96	14	46	36	15	57	24	17	00	12
Chandigarh	0.59	14	38	06	15	46	42	16	48	36
Delhi	0.65	14	36	12	15	47	18	16	51	00
Hyderabad	0.99	14	28	12	16	46	54	16	55	14
Kodaikanal	0.84	14	21	36	15	41	36	16	51	30
Lucknow	0.75	14	39	24	15	51	12	16	55	12
Madras	0.89	14	29	06	15	46	54	16	55	06
Nagpur	0.89	14	32	06	15	48	42	16	56	18
Panaji	0.99	14	17	12	15	39	48	16	52	06
Patna	0.83	14	43	54	15	54	54	16	58	12
Pondicherry	0.86	14	27	42	15	45	48	16	54	00
Pune	0.90	14	20	18	15	41	24	16	52	42
Shillong	0.90	14	51	42	15	59	30	17	00	12
Srinagar	0.47	14	39	54	15	43	42	16	42	06
Varanasi	0.81	14	41	00	15	53	06	16	57	18

Dawn streaks the sky with gold. A million voices rise in homage.

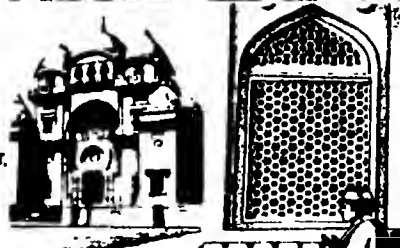
Worship takes as many forms, as the people of India. As music and dance. As living sculptures on ancient walls. As an offering of flowers and incense and flickering oil lamps.

A sweeping stream of faith

From the sacred ice lingam of Lord Shiva at Amarnath in Kashmir, to the Meenakshi temple at Madurai, with its hall of thousand pillars. From the fabled temple of Somnath to the 500 temples of Bhubaneswar where once 7000 flourished. Everywhere in India, you will see symbols of a deep faith.

In the footsteps of Buddha

The message of the enlightened one grows in strength, through stupas and monasteries and cave wonders. The Bodhi tree at Bodhi Gaya. The celestial nymphs at Ajanta, the stupa at Sanchi. Prayer flags fluttering in an evening breeze at Ladakh.



the Dargah at Ajmer, the Jama Masjid at Delhi, the tomb of Salim Chisti at Fatehpur Sikri.

Reverence for life

Mahavira took the path to austerity and founded a faith based on four fundamental virtues. His teachings are followed by millions and are enshrined in monuments like the Jain temples at Dilwara at Mount Abu, Palitana, Ranakpur and Calcutta.

The way of the Guru

Gurdwaras dot the landscape across the country, calling the proud and exuberant Sikhs to the way of the Gurus. Be it at the Golden Temple at Amritsar, or remote snow heights of Hemkund Sahib, near the Valley of Flowers.

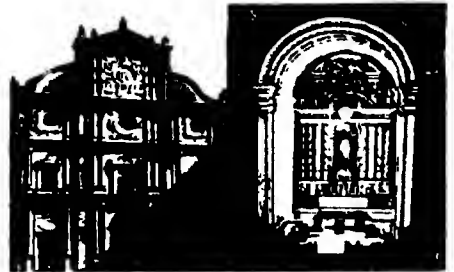
Call to the faithful

The call of the muezzin echoes from a tall minaret, a thousand heads bow in silent prayer. The faithful throng to the edifices of a living faith, at

The path of the Saviour

As early as the 1st century A.D. St. Thomas gave the world its first churches in Madras. Ever since, the path to salvation has led to the white-washed churches of Kerala and Goa. To the Cathedral of Velha Goa, where St. Francis Xavier lies embalmed, and thousands of other destinations.

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Pilgrim's Progress

'In a hostile situation everything is fair'

Laldenga, the Mizo leader, told OM PRAKASH

Q: How were you treated in Tihar jail by the Janata and the Lok Dal governments?

A: The roughest treatment was meted out to me for the first 20 days or so. I was kept in a cell in solitary confinement and I was treated like the condemned prisoner who was lodged five cells away. This condemned prisoner was the person who hijacked and blew up a plane in Lahore in 1971. I was not allowed even to have my Bible, much less other books. (Incidentally Lal Denga preached to 153 Mizo residents of Delhi on Sunday, November 17, 1979 at the Free Church in Green Park). No fan, no mosquito-net, no newspaper, no radio, no meeting relatives or friends without judicial permission, no towel, just a rough blanket and a cemented platform to sleep on.

After 20 days the court granted me B class but still I was not kept in a B class ward. Apparently the Government had instructed the jail authority to humiliate me. I was interrogated twice by CBI officials of the rank of DSP. Two inspectors of the Intelligence Department are on duty for 24 hours in my house even now. But they do not interfere with my day to day functioning though I am not allowed to leave Delhi and am supposed to show my face every week in the CBI headquarters.

When I was in jail my elder son David was threatened (with) arrest. The maintenance allowance which the New Delhi Government had promised while bringing us here from abroad was reduced to half. The telephone was disconnected and has not been restored till today.

Q: What was the immediate provocation for your arrest?

A: (Weighing each word) Well I have been a guest of (the) Indian Government in New Delhi since January 1976 but was kept under illegal house arrest, so I did not know what was happening there. Yes, I have also heard that some arms were given by the Communist Party of Burma but most of them have been snatched from Indian armed forces. In a hostile situation everything is fair. After all, from where would we procure arms? There are very limited resources.

Q: Are you a communist?

A: No. Neither is my Mizo National Front. (Now banned, the first political organisation to be banned after the Emergency). But I believe in secular democracy. We are not responsible for the present situation. The Government unilaterally terminated the talks with me in February 1978 and the then Home Minister, Mr Charan Singh, made a statement to that effect on March 20, 1978, in the Indian Parliament.

Q: Mr Charan Singh charged you with double talk, saying that you backed out of the agreement which

included the laying down of arms by your supporters. Is it true?

A: No, that is wrong. We have not entered into any sort of agreement so far. In 1976 a joint Press statement was issued that we were ready for a political solution within the framework of the Indian Constitution. We also agreed to the cessation of hostile activities till a final solution was reached. But we never agreed to unconditional laying down of arms. The peace talks with this understanding, mind you, not agreement, was started in 1976, with Mrs Gandhi's Government and was continued with the Desai Government also. In fact Mr Desai has gone on record (as having said) that the so-called July 1 agreement was no agreement. It was some officials of the Union Home Ministry who misled his Government and the nation by wrongly saying that Mr Lal Denga and his MNF had signed an agreement but refused to implement it.

Q: What is the present situation and your stand now?

A: The situation is worst in Mizoram. There is a puppet Government led by Mr T. Sailo, who in order to keep his masters here in good humour is allowing the Indian armed personnel to let loose terror and brutality backed up by a draconian law, known as the Special Armed Forces Act of Assam. This law authorises any person above the rank of NCO to shoot to kill any persons suspected of being underground personnel, search any house without a warrant and destroy any premises if in his opinion he believes such house or premises to be the hideout of the underground personnel! These actions cannot be challenged in the court of law without prior permission from Government of India. There are over 5,000 such persons who have the authority to search anybody's house and shoot anybody whom they find suspicious. They have indiscriminately killed over 1,000 people since 1966 and have molested hundreds of women. I know such would not be the orders from the Centre but there cannot be any check in such a disturbed area. Can elections be free and fair in such a situation? Elections so held in Mizoram can never, therefore, reflect the true will of the people but (can) only make a mockery of democracy. Therefore, the Sailo Government is not democratic. The vote percentage has been lowered from 38 to 33 per cent. The opposition Parties of Mizoram who represent 75 per cent of the population there think that the problem of Mizoram is a political problem and a political solution should be found.

Q: Maybe they would also change their stand once they come to power?

A: (Laughs) Yes, maybe. But I do not think so. Last year they were refused (the permission) to form an alternative government when Sailo's Ministry fell.

Q: Sorry, for the interruption. You were talking about your present stand.

A: Yes, I was saying that the present state in Mizoram is Desai's Government's doing. I met him twice. Both times he threatened me with arrest unless the MNF surrendered arms. But that was unacceptable to my men. Finally they arrested me, a member of the peace delegation and a symbol of the MNF. I was not arrested for a personal crime but I was arrested because of the stand and policy of the MNF Party. Therefore, the MNF men thought that the whole organisation had been arrested. Now 80 per cent of the Union Territory population is behind me. They all feel that first, all pending cases against me and my family members (should) be withdrawn and only then could a meaningful negotiation be held. Mizoram is a tribal area and therefore it was excluded from the purview of the Constitution of India 1935, known as the State Act of India 1935. Because of the imposition of the Constitution of India (in the making of which Mizoram was not represented) the Mizo people feel dominated. Therefore, the problem of Mizoram is political and as such must be solved politically and not by military strength.

Q: What is your political demand for the solution of the problem?

A: It would be wrong to spell out any political demand without consulting the MNF Executive Committee. When the MNF convention in Calcutta resolved to accept a solution within the Constitution of India it was understood that Defence, Foreign Affairs, Currency, and Communications will remain with the Centre and that Mizoram shall be one of the federating units of India and the nature of its autonomy to be negotiated with the Government of India.

Q: You have recently met many Indian leaders including Mrs Gandhi. Do you think after the elections you can achieve this?

A: I did not discuss politics with Mrs Gandhi. I just met her to thank her for the concern she showed to my family during my imprisonment. All other leaders like Bahuguna, Linaye, Fernandes and Vajpayee appreciate our stand. Even Mr Chavan said on November 21 in New Delhi that he wanted to be in touch with me and that he was interested in a negotiated political solution to the problem. This I believe is a positive development.

This interview was conducted on November 22, 1979

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Blending what Asia can give and Europe can teach

By SWARUP DUTTA

SHOULD a present-day Indian, with no special interest in the personae of the nineteenth century renaissance in Bengal have any interest in the life of Gooroodas Banerjee? The answer must be in the affirmative because any attempt to synthesise our heritage and tradition with the gains of western civilisation must be of abiding interest to any Indian keen on achieving 'progress' without forgetting his 'roots'. Gooroodas's life was one such long quest. What makes the biography more illuminating is the attempt to relate the hero to the social history of his times. The broader canvas is the 'Indo-British cultural confrontation', against which Gooroodas truly comes alive.

The greatest minds of the world were shaped by such encounters between two cultures. The early Christian nursed his new faith on an intellectual diet which was mostly pagan. The finest minds of the Abbasid period in Arab history were fed on Persian. The Hebrews were exposed to a pervasive Hellenic influence. The great civilisations of the world fulfil themselves through such encounters with other civilisations and there can be no intellectual autarky that does not lead to intellectual death. The author presents in this biography the image of an orthodoxy which kept itself alive through a large measure of cautious liberalism and presents in the process the unique personality of a man who discovered the finest values of life in a tension between a love of tradition and a responsible non-conformity.

Our understanding of the personality of Gooroodas has been so long moulded by Sarat Kumar Ray's *Ranga-Gourab Gooroodas* (1921), Chuni Lal Basu's English biography of the man published in 1921, Upendra Chandra Banerjee's *Reminiscences, Speeches and Writings of Gooroodas Banerjee* (1927) and the valuable essays in *Sir Gooroodas Banerjee Centenary Commemorative Volume* edited by Anathnath Basu in 1948. Bhola Chatterji has new material to offer.

What separates us from Gooroodas today is not just the distance of time and (that is not too long for he died not more than 60 years ago.) is really a very long moral distance. Today we may be a little too small to under-

stand his greatness, too self-centred to grasp the selflessness which his career exemplifies, too shallow to plumb the depth of a pious soul and too vulgar to appreciate his dignity and his refinement. He relinquished his judgeship of the Calcutta High Court because he thought he had held that office for too long and that it must now go to somebody else. He accepted a second term of vice-chancellorship of Calcutta University only when Lord Lansdowne assured him personally that he would be relieved of that office within a year. When Lansdowne requested him to complete his second term as vice-chancellor he politely disoblged the Viceroy. Travelling with Lord Curzon on the viceregal train he refused to have any food and appreciating the Brahmin's rigour the Viceroy asked the train to stop to enable him to cook a Hindu meal at the nearest station. Gooroodas respected his masters but never cringed before them for any favour.

Today the whole question about Gooroodas is what really was his attitude towards tradition in a changing society and how did he respond to the new values of the nineteenth century Bengali renaissance which absorbed some of the ideals of western liberalism? Bhola Chatterji has raised this question and he has answered it unambiguously. And his answer is sustained by an analysis of the interaction between tradition and modernity in a man who was too wise to exalt the one at the cost of the other. To say that Gooroodas was not a radical is to say the obvious. What is important is that he did not believe in a radicalism which cut off society from its spiritual and moral roots. For the inheritors of an ancient civilisation a great future is built on the sure ground of a great past. These of us who are incapable of appearing progressive without repeating some radical jargon or swearing by some imported ideology may not understand the naturalness and lucidity of Gooroodas's liberal temper. Bhola Chatterji has very important things to say on Gooroodas's very appropriately entitled as 'Not an iconoclast'. Gooroodas was neither a rebel nor a dyed-in-the-wool traditionalist' he says in this chapter, and he gives several instances of Gooroodas's capacity for integrating the finest things of tradition with the urgent needs of a modern society.

That Gooroodas could be a determined non-conformist to be true to

his conscience we can see from the brave stand he took in the famous Kalitani case in the Calcutta High Court. In this case the High Court was called upon to decide 'whether under Hindu law as administered in the Bengal School, a widow who has once inherited the estate of her deceased husband is liable to forfeit that estate by reason of unchastity'. Kalitani took a paramour after the death of her husband and on that ground a relation of her husband claimed her husband's property. The case was heard by the Full Bench of the Calcutta High Court and amongst its ten members seven decided in favour of the widow and three including Justice Dwaiakamath Mitra, the positivist disagreed. As a lawyer Gooroodas took the view the property once vested could not be divested and further added that it would be the height of injustice and inhumanity to reduce a widow to destitution for a moral lapse. Gooroodas's view was looked upon as an assault on orthodoxy from a most unsuspected quarter; but Gooroodas would not compromise his conscience to preserve his reputation as a traditionalist.

Bhola Chatterji has presented Gooroodas as an educationist not simply because he was vice-chancellor. He was an educationist because he had a philosophy of education which he presented in his work like his 326-page *A Few Thoughts on Education* (1904) and 166-page *The Education Problem in India* (1914). For a full statement of his philosophy of life we must however turn to his *Jnan O Karma* (1910) a classic of Bengali prose which Dr P. K. Ray compared to Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*. The work reveals the mind of Gooroodas as *Dharmatattva* reveals that of Bankim-chandra Chatterji. The intellectual temper which went into the making of this book shows what Lord Curzon found in the man's blend of the best that Asia can give and Europe can teach'. Bhola Chatterji's biography of Gooroodas is the story of a Bengali who was an eminent jurist and an eminent educationist and above all a man who embodied in his life and career the highest ideals of his race and of his times.

An otherwise handsomely produced book has been partly marred by some proof-reading errors.

Indo-British cultural confrontation: Gooroodas Banerjee and his times, by Bhola Chatterji, Minerva Associates, Rs 20.

Cricket's modern patrons

By RICHARD CASHMAN

How does a cricketer support himself when he is not playing the game? The answer is provided in these exclusive extracts from "Patrons, Players and the Crowd" (Orient Longman Ltd.,

Price Rs 120)

AFTER 1947 MANY PRINCES were forced to prune their cricketing ventures, to dismantle their teams and to terminate cricketing appointments. Some princes continued to employ and even recruit sportsmen but their patronage was on a reduced scale. As a result some cricketers found themselves unemployed for a time, but not for long because the commercial establishments and the banks took over the role of patronage established by the princes and, to a lesser extent, by the British.

While there was a continuity in cricket patronage, there was a significant change in the scope and purpose of post-Independence cricket employment because the commercial environment was quite different from the world of the princes. Whereas the princely houses were scattered all over the country, the new patrons

were located mostly in Bombay and in other large cities; and this helped to change the cricket map of India by creating greater centralisation in the game. The businessman also operated under more constraints than the prince did, funding was no longer 'unlimited' since the modern sporting promoter was accountable to his board of directors or management committee which approved an annual sporting budget which defined the extent of the company commitment. A programme could be expanded but to do so a manager had to argue the case for increased expenditure. Then there were the constraints of the

market. A firm would only take on sportsmen when it was doing well and if there was a decline in the fortunes of the company they would be the first group to go. Business houses were also sensitive to the policies and performances of their competitors so that the achievement of a company team often influenced the extent of a company commitment to a sport. The businessman thus looked upon cricket patronage in a different light to the prince; a cricketing investment should be profitable to the company in that it should enhance the advertising programme or at least be justifiable in terms of creating general goodwill for the company. Hence, it was necessary that such an investment should be tightly organised, well managed and closely scrutinised so that it was managed along professional lines.

Bombay took the lead in cricket patronage since many of the largest firms and banks of the country have their headquarters there. Much of the history of how contemporary patronage evolved in this city was enshrined in the development of an inter-office tournament, the Times of India Challenge Shield, which entered its fiftieth season in 1979-80. It was the opinion of K. M. Rangnekar, who played in the shield matches in the 1930s and 1940s and represented India in 1947, that 'Bombay cricket was built on the Times of India Shield'. Unfortunately, while there are many books on communal cricket in Bombay along with histories of the Ranji Trophy and Test cricket in India, this formative contest has been virtually ignored. This tournament was unique not only in India but in the world; in the 1978-79 season there were no less than 260 office teams entered in the seven divisions. An interesting feature of the compe-

G. R. Vishwanath, an employee of the State Bank of India



tion was that patronage operated not only in the top divisions, where teams could boast of many Ranji and Test players, but also at the level of lowly-placed G Division teams. Firms in this category could not match the high salaries of the A Division company teams, but they could augment their salaries by 25 to 40 per cent for a good club cricketer who might help the team rise to the F or even the E Division. Another common practice was to recruit players on an ad hoc basis, to hire them just for the company matches. Uncommitted university students provided a pool of willing cricket mercenaries. Although the eight A Division teams were the strongest, former and current Test players could be found in lower divisions. In the 1977-78 season Salim Durrani played for Century Rayon and Ajit Pai for the Bank of Baroda, both B Division teams. In the same year Mohinder Amarnath was recruited by a C Division team, Air India, which was promoted to a higher division in the following year as a result. Amarnath, employed in the Delhi office of Air India, travelled to Bombay to strengthen the Air India Times Shield team. While most teams would play only from one to four matches in the Times Shield (the maximum number of games would be seven in the lower divisions), there were many allied tournaments and successful teams would be invited to play in the Police Shield, the Mahindra and Mahindra Tournament and many other contests. While some matches were played at the weekend, others took place on working day.

OVER SEVERAL DECADES Tata's developed policies concerning the recruitment and employment of cricketers which provided a model for most of the commercial patrons. A central notion was that the ideal time to recruit a cricketer was when he was young and on the threshold of his career rather than when he was an established Test player. This was based on the assumption that it was better to mould a team gradually rather than to build from the top. Patrons followed this policy partly because it was cheaper to enlist a player at an early stage of his career before he had made his reputation. In addition most firms were aware that the poaching of established stars from other companies would only inflate the cricket market. A typical appointment was that of Sudhir Naik who joined Tata's in 1968, his second year as a Ranji Trophy player but six years before his Test debut in 1974. When Naik joined Tata's he was a promising state player with the prospect of going further.

The timing of recruitment was a critical factor because it was essential not to strike too early, before the prospects of a player could be assessed carefully, or too late, for when the cricketer's talents were known, recruitment would be more difficult.

Senior players in the company team played an important role in spotting talented young players and in making the initial approaches. When Umesh Kulkarni used to join Tata players at the nets every afternoon, he caught the eye of the Secretary of the Tata Sports Club, Tamhane, who invited him to join Tata's. Kulkarni joined the company in 1963, the year he made the Bombay team for the first time. There was good prospect that once a player committed himself to a major company he would remain with the firm because it was in his long term interests to do so.

Another powerful cricket patron in the 1950s and early 1960s was the Associated Cement Corporation (A. C. C.) which won the Times of India Shield five times from 1952-61 and once more in 1965. While the company had retained a policy of cricket patronage since then, it has slipped back in recent times since the level of its more recent recruitment has not matched the expansionary years of the 1950s. Unlike Tata's the initial A. C. C. involvement in cricket was not planned in any formal sense. Prior to Independence this then British-managed firm had taken on the former Test player, S.H.M. Colah, who became a branch manager at Ahmedabad. Colah was not taken on as a cricketer since he joined the company after his retirement from the game. (In his playing days he had been in the service of Nawanagar). E. S. Maka joined the company in 1945 and M. K. Mantri was added in 1946 but Mantri stated that "I was not taken on as a cricketer." Having completed his M. A., Mantri was recruited as a junior officer through the regular channels. In fact when Mantri became a contender for the Australian tour of 1947, though he later failed to win selection, one manager expressed concern because it was the firm's intention to send Mantri to the Far East to explore this market at the very same time. Rusi Modi then joined A. C. C. in 1950. Although Modi was then an established Test player, he did not secure the position as a cricketer; rather the critical factor, he suggested, was the help of the Governor of Bombay who spoke to the Chairman of A. C. C. on Modi's behalf. Modi had been aide-de-camp to the Governor since 1948.

The Reserve Bank of India managed to intrude into the two-horse race between Tata's and A.C.C. between 1952-63 when it annexed the shield in 1956. This was the first occasion in which a bank made its presence felt in the premier inter-office competition but it proved to be a false start. The bank's success was largely the result of the shrewd recruiting of its captain, M. S. Hardikar, who had joined the bank as a clerk in 1954 when he was taken on as a cricketer. Hardikar had studied only up to the inter-science level which would not have been sufficient to gain admission to the bank through the regular channels. He left the

bank in 1962 because he realised that he would not have gone up very high there. Unlike Tata's and A.C.C. the Reserve Bank chose to engage most of its shield team on an ad-hoc or contract basis. It did this by "employing" promising college students "for the sake of being on the muster roll" in order to play three or four matches per year. The bank's 1956 recruits included Dilip Sardesai and S. Adhikari, who later played for Bombay. They were at college when they joined and received Rs 250-300 just to play for the bank. Sardesai recounted that while 'I could have stayed with the bank if I wanted to ... I was not interested in them and they were not interested in me other than as a cricketer'. The engagement of young, uncommitted cricketers on a contract or professional basis was and is a common practice. Ajit Wadekar, when he was at university, used to 'sign the muster' for a pharmaceutical company, then in A Division, and received Rs 35 per game. In more recent times, Hemant Kanitkar, who is employed in his family's building and contracting firm, which he also jointly owns, turned out for J.K. Sports and for Century Rayon in the Times Shield.

Employment opportunities outside Bombay were even more limited in the 1950s. At the time of Independence Vinoo Mankad found himself without a job since Nawanagar could no longer employ cricketers. Mankad chose to become a professional cricketer which meant spending part of the year in the Lancashire League and another part with a number of Ranji Trophy teams. Once, when he was visited by Pankaj Gupta in 1948, he asked 'why something could not be done to keep our cricketers at home'. There were a number of other players of the 1950s who followed Mankad to the leagues and became professional cricketers within India also: they included C. S. Nayudu, G. S. Ramchand, V. Manjrekar and Subhas Gupte. However, employment as a professional cricketer was only a short term solution to the problem of a career as Gupte discovered when his art was on the decline; he knew that his professional days were over and tried to settle down to a good job. As he was unfortunate in not landing a good job he decided to settle down in the West Indies where he obtained a job in a sugar concern in Trinidad.

Unlike today, when cricket enhances career prospects, in the late 1940s and 1950s the game could jeopardise a career and vice versa. Rusi Modi regarded himself fortunate to have secured appointment as aide-de-camp to the Governor of Bombay in 1948 since this was a useful job for establishing contacts and his career in general and it was offered to him at a time when cricketers were not paid very well. However, this prestigious position seriously interrupted Modi's cricket career because he could now only appear in Test matches and had to forego most first-class cricket, including the Ranji Trophy matches. ■

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Asif's last battle

By KISHORE CHATTERJEE

I WILL always remember till my cricketing memory fades like the four-thirty light at the Eden Gardens, the farewell innings of Asif Iqbal Rizvi, the Pakistani captain. I shall remember it for all its triumph and all its tragedy. A long innings like Asif's had to come one day to an end. But what made the atmosphere at Eden Gardens on that Sunday evening tense with anticipation was the fact that Asif Iqbal, with a perfectly timed sense of drama and destiny had announced his retirement on the eve of the Sixth Test Match. So, every one of the 85,000 spectators watching Wasim Raja return to the pavilion, knew that Asif Iqbal would come out for the last time on the battle green of a Test Match.

We saw Asif walk down the clubhouse steps past the clicking cameras and emerge into the light and we watched him with a sense of breathless excitement. Someone in the crowd, with a sense of drama equal to Asif's own, pointed out that he was wearing the traditional green Pakistani cap, instead of the white panama he usually dons. Was this a touching gesture from a man who was throughout his long cricketing career, one of Pakistan's brightest stars? We shall never know. But this we knew, that Asif wanted desperately to win and if ever a captain deserved to play the innings of his life and lead his country to victory it was Asif Iqbal as he walked out in the pale light of the evening sun to play his final innings at the Eden Gardens.

I do not know whether any of the others did, but I prayed that evening to whatever god of rules the destiny of cricketers. I prayed for Asif Iqbal. I forgot for a moment that this was a war in white flannels. I ignored the national flag that waved a few rows in front and I hoped that Asif would play an innings like his famous 146 at the Oval. On this early February evening too, the stage was set for heroics and Asif couldn't have hoped for a more challenging end to his Test career. Pakistan needed 153 runs to win with about 15 minutes and 20 mandatory overs in hand, when the captain took guard.

There is something inexplicably sad about a famous cricketer going out to play his last Test innings. As Asif slowly walked to the crease I thought that his had been a long career, a chequered innings—from his Ranji Trophy days in Hyderabad to his early Test career as a seamer in Pakistan, to his emerging, because of a shoulder injury and inspired by a match saving partnership as a batsman, to become, eventually, the best member six batsman in the world.

Though the cares of captaincy had weighed on Asif's elegant shoulders,

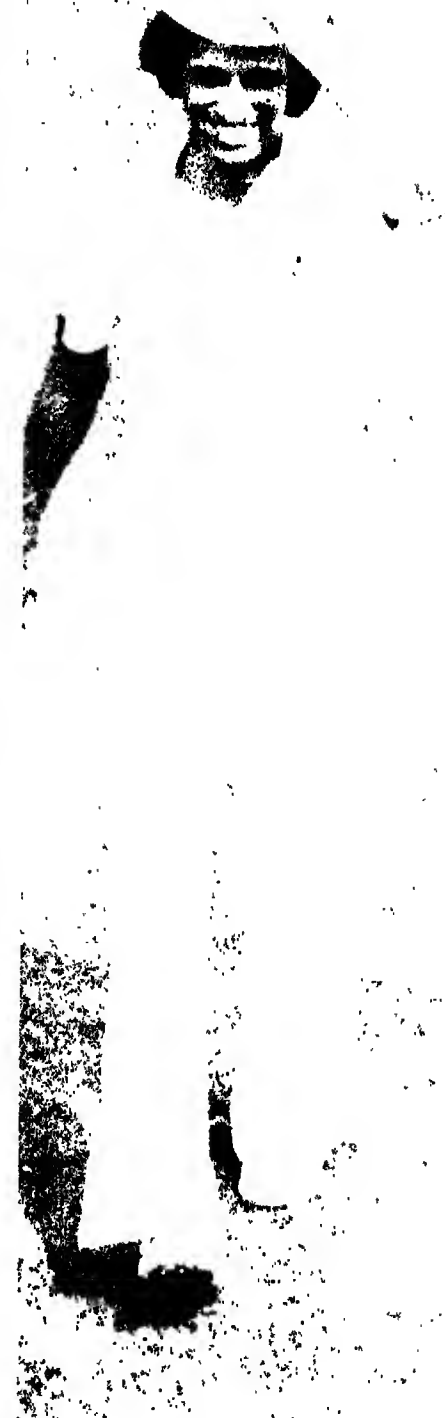
he had played two characteristic innings at Bangalore and Delhi. In the first innings of the Sixth Test his sporting declaration had deprived us of his batting. And now as the Indian fielders stood clapping, he was going to start his last Test innings.

Shankar Seti

HOW brilliantly Asif began. With Javed Miandad at the other end, he spearheaded a session of daring, professional batting which made the asking rate of seven runs an over look easy. As Asif stole the most impossible singles I realised that he was determined to turn his final hour into his greatest triumph. Here was the man who had gone on record saying that to play against India in a Test match was the greatest ambition of his life; who had come back from retirement to play the 1978 series in Pakistan, and who had reached the apotheosis of his ambition when he came to India as the captain of the visiting Pakistani team. Now, in the dying hours of this long six-Test series, with his team two down, he was making a final Herculean effort to snatch an impossible victory.

I had always wanted to see Asif bat, because it is unorthodox batsmen like him who keep alive the unexpected quality of the game, which is one of its most enduring charms. On that final evening Asif's batting was an example of brave and inspired professionalism—the manner in which he danced down the pitch to play Kapil Dev. The way he, like an Ustad playing *rags*, played his shots at whatever point he desired. And how well young Javed Miandad responded to every call of his skipper. Together for a short and scintillating half hour, Asif and Miandad on that final evening of the series, gave us a glimpse of high powered professional batting which had made Pakistani cricket so famous. And then, as we were savouring the heady brew of pure vintage cricket Asif Iqbal slipped and fell while trying to steal a hectic second run and was run out. Had he not slipped he would certainly have reached home safely before Karsan Ghavri's throw could find Dilip Doshi's hands. Instead, with a look of desperate anguish which still haunts me, the Pakistani captain saw Doshi take the return smartly and bring to an end his last innings and his Test career to the sad music of falling balls.

As I saw Asif pathetically reach for the crease, I thought that this was typical cricketing irony that this grand fighter should end his Test career in this terrible manner. To slip and fall at the time of his greatest triumph: what a way to go, I thought. For Asif and Miandad with the support of Inuran and Bari to follow may have pulled off a fantastic victory, and nobody in the Eden Gardens that evening, with the possible exception of the eleven Indian players would have grudged them this honour.



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Asif Iqbal



The cold pens of statisticians cannot tell cricket enthusiasts of tomorrow the essence, the flavour, the atmosphere of Asif's short farewell innings. When this Indo-Pak series is history Asif's "run out 15" will seem to the readers of tomorrow to be no score at all. But once again cold statistics will lie, for it will not speak of the effect his tragic dismissal had on the crowd which reacted instantaneously with a gigantic groan that turned into one of the grandest ovations given to any cricketer at the Eden Gardens, as Asif gathered the debris of his hopes and aspirations and walked back to the pavilion. The effect on Miandad of Asif's run out was shell-shocking.

As he saw Asif fall, he sat for a long time on the ground in anguish. Consolation and encouraging words from Imran Khan, the next batsman, had no effect.

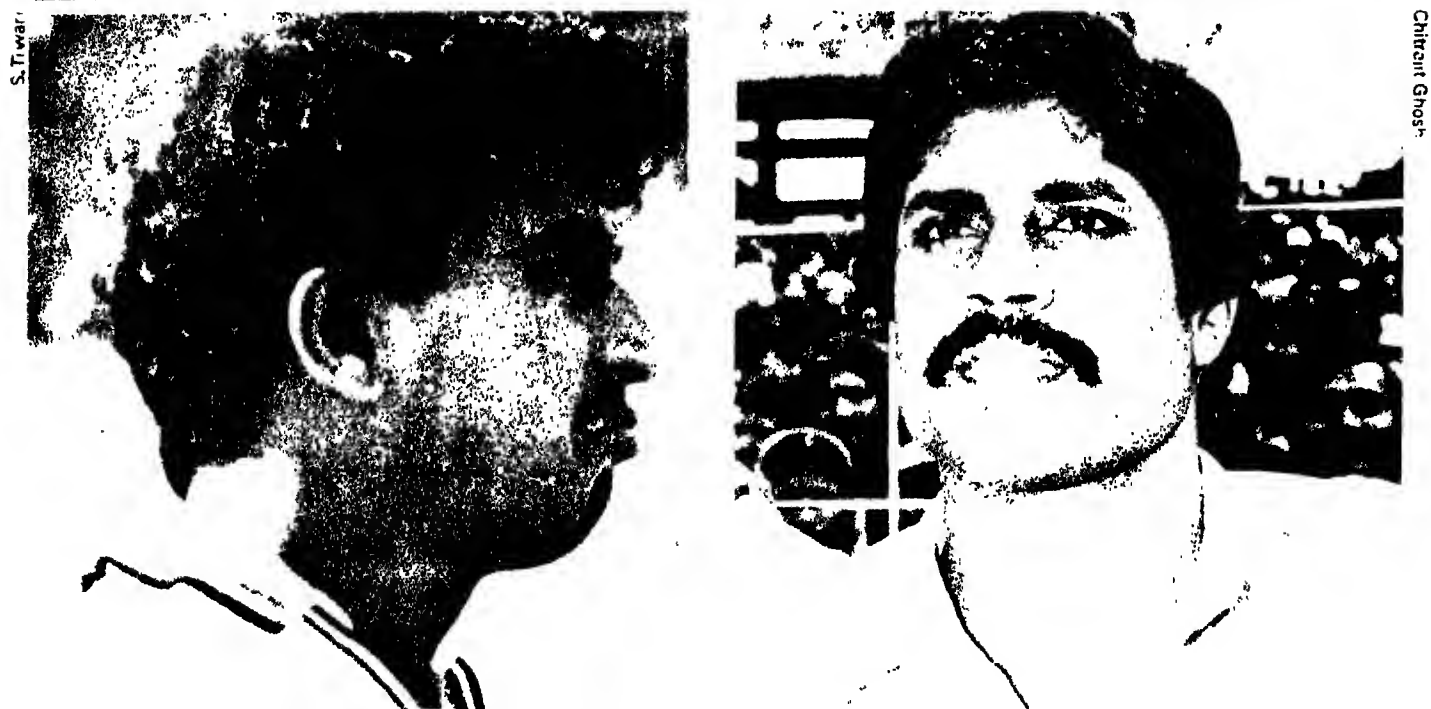


Srinak Sait

Had Asif Iqbal been bowled, or caught or even lbw we would not perhaps have felt so cheated. Had he not played so well, shown so much promise of greater excitement ahead, we would not have felt that with his departure cricket had suddenly dropped on earthy, dusty green from Olympian heights. As Asif walked back, he may have noticed some rose petals on the ground, for they were the scattered remnants of a garland which a little boy running into the ground had wanted to give Asif and which had been torn to shreds near the clubhouse during his struggle with the authorities. Asif could well have picked up a few of those scattered petals as a sad memento of his final farewell innings. For a more glorious garland was snatched away from him by the irony of fate which makes cricket, like life, sometimes so bitter sweet.

Fun and games

DAVID McMAHON reports on the Telerama Single Wicket Competition



Sunil Gavaskar and Kapil Dev: Joint winners of the Telerama trophy

THERE was fun and frolic aplenty. Lots of high jinks and laughter. And once in a while there was some serious cricket as well. It was certainly a welcome change from the tensions of the recently concluded series against Pakistan and it was abundantly clear that all concerned enjoyed themselves thoroughly. To all intents and purposes, the second Telerama Single Wicket Championship was good fun all through.

The big attractions were the Test players themselves, of course. With them were a number of local stars and T. Srinivasan of Tamil Nadu who was here on holiday and who participated wearing Karsan Ghavri's trousers and someone else's shirt. There was another familiar face as well — M. L. Jaisinha, the ever-popular "Jai" as he is known. Jai's first round opponent was Karsan Ghavri who lost his wicket before he could cross Jai's score. The latter's victory was greeted with generous applause, while one section of the stands chanted "He had to lose, he had to lose, otherwise he would have been dropped from the Test squad". (Jai is one of the selectors.)

Then there was the encounter between Chetan Chauhan and Sunil Gavaskar. Chauhan batted first and went out to the crease arm in arm with his former captain. Later, when it was Chauhan's turn to bowl to Gavaskar, a catch was floored in his second over and Chauhan, unflappable as always, grinned broadly. When the performance was repeated the very next ball, Chauhan turned

to the fielder and laughingly mimed the greasing of a palm. Naturally the crowd loved him for it.

Yashpal Sharma too, seems to be another born entertainer. In his semifinal tie against Kapil Dev he started by demanding a new ball. When this request was turned down he bowled a few deliveries with the old ball that was given to him instead. Then he stalked over to the umpire and in mock anger demanded that the ball be inspected. The umpire played along with him and dutifully made a show of inspecting it before returning it with a smile, whereupon Yashpal shook his head emphatically and gesticulated wildly, indicating that the seam was split. Of course the ball was given back to him while he threw a mock fit of sulks. When he lost to Kapil there was another show of histrionics as he pretended to cry in mortification. Dilip Doshi made a big hit before his home crowd — literally, that is. When he walked out before the start of his first match, commentator Ashis Ray announced, tongue-in-cheek that India's new all-rounder was about to take guard and was rewarded with a roar of laughter from the stands. But Doshi proved that he meant business and hammered nine runs off the first of the three overs, which remained a record until the semi-finals. He had it all his way till he met Gavaskar in the quarter finals, which turned out to be the closest encounter of the day. Gavaskar batted first and scored 19 runs before Doshi dismissed him

Then, as Doshi prepared to square up to Gavaskar's bowling, Dicky Rutnagur announced over the PA system "Now let us see whether Doshi's batting is better than Gavaskar's bowling". Doshi came very near to elbowing Gavaskar out, as he had only five runs to get off the last three balls. But with one ball to go his score still hadn't moved and despite the fact that he danced down the pitch for the last delivery he couldn't hit the six that he needed to win.

The final between Kapil and Gavaskar turned out to be the liveliest bout of the proceedings. The latter batted first and scored 24. Then the fun started in earnest. Gavaskar bowled the first ball to Kapil with his ten fielders in the arc between long on and long off. Then he set a normal field and Kapil raced to 20. Gavaskar took the ball and walked to the boundary line to begin his run up while Kapil shivered in mock trepidation. Then he turned around to bat left-handed but when he resumed his normal stance Gavaskar refused to budge, till he reverted to batting left handed. Once, Kapil allowed the ball to rap him on his pads and Gavaskar appealed raucously for lbw and finally sank to his knees in supplication while Kapil guffawed at the other end. With the scores tied at 24 each it was natural that Kapil should be caught but it was a measure of the spirit of the proceedings that the crowd didn't shout for refunds. ■

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**A PROMISE OF
BEAUTIFUL PRINTS.**

CHEMBUR hummed with activity during the two-day-long wedding celebrations of Rishi Kapoor and Neetu Singh, filmdom's steadiest pair for over four years. First day, (January 22) it was the typical Punjabi wedding, complete with the white horse *baraat* which was to meet the car cavalcade of the bride's party. Prominent among the bridegroom's party was Dilip Kumar who accompanied the *baraat*-procession, as Rishi's relative. Chintu, needless to say, was nearly fainting with the excitement and the claustrophobic garb he had to wear. Neetu was her usual, cheery, sporting, casual self decked in very pretty bridal finery. The next day was the

typical filmi party scene, a real mob turned out at the reception which was held at the RK Studios. It was a real mela. Someone said it wouldn't be considered a success if it were not such a crowded, police-controlled affair! A week after all the celebrations, Raj Kapoor was ensconced in his cottage-room at the Studio, conferring daily with his close aides. He is about to start work on his next film, after a gap of three years since the making of *Satyam Shivam Sundram*.

THE real *takkar* between two cats which is going to take place, should prove two things, (a) who is the better actress and who is prettier. (b) who is the

hero's real girl. The two cats are *Yogita Bali* and *Ranjeeta* and the hero they are falling over, and co-starring is *Mithun Chakravarty*. The film is *Khwab* made by Shakti Samanta, who has always liked Yogita and given her good roles in all his films. But both Yogita and Ranjeeta are telling people separately that the one has a better role in the film than the other. Of course, Ranjeeta has been a bit more tactful and careful about what she speaks. But dear dear Pinky who is openly hostile to the other girl, who has more films with her boyfriend, is the one who wants a confrontation and is working to that end.

SO what if newcomer *Deepthi Naval* spends a lot of time with *Gulzar*? She used to do it before the film world took any notice of her and the two enjoyed painting and music together, besides poetry and weaving dreams of artistic ambition for the young aspirant. So what if she still gives him her time today, when she has made some headway in films? He was her first film-contact, wasn't he? Never mind that they look a strange pair—she, glowing and shining with youth and he, grizzly and unshaven with more salt than pepper in his hair. If she doesn't mind it, why should the gossips?

UNLIKE *Katy Mirza* or *Moushumi Chatterji* who started their respective careers with the ambition of becoming the next "Meena Kumari", there is a new girl, *Poonam Dhillon* who has made it but hates the thought of being likened to the "Greats" like Meena Kumari or any other legend. She is embarrassed when some flatterer tells her she'll surpass Meenaji. She feels quite rightly, that she is so young and has such a long way ahead of her that being bracketed with the oldtime greats is not desirable. She is happy running around in her jeans and doing little romantic films with actors like Farouque Shaikh in *Noorie* as the dimpled Kashmiri belle and is in no hurry to become a legend. Other "youngsters" please note.

IT is not for any other reason—especially their past affair—that *Simple Kapadia* did not attend *Ranjeet's* wedding, but the terrible fact that she had an accident and broke her back. She was standing on the dining table to wear a sari. She took a step back while adjusting it forgetting that she was standing on a table. The step brought her crashing backwards on the floor and she couldn't get up. Confined to bed for several weeks, she isn't allowed to stand up for long. And so everyone thought Simple was weeping away at home while her ex-flame Ranjeet was getting married.

Ivanka Das



Rakha

his second over and over again, grinned broadly. pable as always, his performance was repeated

Gavaskar runs before Doshi dismissed

"IN Madras two people can't be close to each other without getting married, but Bangalore isn't that conservative" said Kannada director T. S. Ranga while denying reports that he's soon going to get hitched to his star-discovery Ashwini. Though Ranga's *Savutri* is yet to be released in Karnataka, it has been already screened for the critics and Ranga's film industry friends. A very successful new director from Madras, J. Mahendran had signed Ashwini for *Uthiripookal*. Hence the interest shown by Madras Press in Ashwini and Ranga. Following the success of *Uthiripookal* Ashwini has received many more offers but she seems to be reluctant to come to Madras. Well, the Madras journalists like to believe that she will change her mind, if Ranga accompanies her.

A well known Tamil journalist who also happens to spawn stories and direct films, recently narrated one of his new stories to a bright young actress and her mother. The story revolves around an ex-actress, her daughter who's also an actress, and a family friend, a director, who has an affair with the mother, and then "makes it" with the daughter. The two women seemed to be impressed by the story, but the mother politely suggested that some other actress, other than her own daughter, ought to be featured in the film. The journalist didn't really know why the two women were feeling so squeamish about the story. A month later he knew. The director performed a vanishing trick and got married to the bright young actress. The mother is still sobbing and telling the whole world what a big bad wolf the ex-family friend was. Of course she doesn't want people to ask her if she too had an affair with her daughter's "husband".

NOW that he's threatening to daub himself with grease paint and play celluloid Robinhood, MGR has started asking journalists not to indulge in scurrilous writings. Well, has he forgotten the past, when some of the magazines run by his Partymen contained vigorous gossip items, not to forget the highly salacious bedroom stories?



Girish Karnad

JUST as MGR is about to resume his acting career, his celluloid rival, Sivaji Ganesan, who's still going strong, and looks quite fit (unlike MGR) has agreed to work in two films written by M. Karunanidhi. Sivaji and the DMK boss came closer during the recent parliamentary elections, and Karunanidhi's participation in Sivaji's eldest son Ramkumar's wedding also con-

tributed to the planning of joint ventures. Once upon a time, Karunanidhi's film contained lengthy tirades against religion, but since Sivaji is averse to such things now, Karunanidhi has to be content doling out political innuendoes. (Obviously, these will be aimed at MGR.)

SIVAJI'S prestigious film *Rishi Moolam* inspired by a very successful play,

couldn't stand the competition offered by Billa, and has turned out to be an average success. Of course, its director S. P. Muthuraman should feel glad that *Rishi Moolam* has done far better than *Vetriku Oruvan*, a lundered per cent disaster involving Sivaji and S. P. Muthuraman.

MEENA, the sprightly model, who made her debut in Sridhar's *Shakthi* (opposite Kamalahasan) has been replaced by upcoming Malayalam actress Ambika. Meena was quite enthusiastic about the film, but her old man who seems to be a conservative Catholic was feeling terrible about her debut on screen. He didn't mind his daughter modelling, but a screen career, well, the Church wouldn't like it. Anyway, the producers of *Shakti* too must have lost interest in grooming Meena though they were quite enthusiastic about her initially. A long charter of my-daughter-won't wear-revealing-costumes and my-daughter-won't-do-this was presented to the producers even before the contract was signed. And the demands got stiffer once the shooting began.

A huge procession of Swami Ayyappa devotees was passing through Mount Road. One of the devotees happened to look into one of the cars stationed at the traffic junction, and whispered *Uthiri Pookal*. Almost every devotee who was chanting the name of Swami Ayyappa with frenzy looked at the actor whose performance in *Uthiri Pookal* is still raved about. This hit film was released 16 weeks ago. And the actor Charuhasan who came into the film accidentally, doesn't seem to be interested in films any more. A lawyer by profession, Charuhasan is busy organising brother Kamalahasan's film career. "Well, mine was a well written role. And it was acceptable because it was well placed in a good film, but personally speaking, I should have done far better. If I were the director, and somebody had given a similar performance, I wouldn't have been satisfied" he said.

PIOUSJI



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U S H A

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Beginning February 17

This week the Sun, Mercury and Kethu are conjoined in Aquarius, Venus is in Pisces, Rahu, Jupiter and Mars are in Leo and Neptune and Urenus are in Scorpio. The Moon will be moving through Pisces, Arles and Taurus from Aquarius.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Your domestic problems will cease to bother you. Your financial position too will improve. On the professional front you will achieve success. Don't indulge in flattery. Keep yourself very active. You will be able to get more money through your efforts. Your dark days are coming to an end. You will make new friends and silence your enemies. **Good dates:** 17, 19, 20 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 6. **Favourable direction:** South-west.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) You will face problems on the financial front. However, you will make a lot of money later in the week. Do not be extravagant. Your demands will be met. Avoid unnecessary expenses. This is not the opportune moment for speculation, gambling or betting. Depend more on partnership ventures. A short journey is also predicted. **Good dates:** 20, 21 and 23. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 7. **Favourable direction:** North.



GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) You will soon find a solution to your problems. Depend on your own efforts. Don't be slack. Be swift and serious. Financially you will find it difficult to make both ends meet. Your family problems will continue to bother you. Your brothers and sisters will force you to seek loans. Property deals will be clinched in your favour. However, you will spend the weekend gloriously. **Good dates:** 17, 18 and 20. **Lucky number:** 13. **Favourable direction:** South-east.



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) You will be disowned by others. Friends will let you down. A serious tussle is also likely to take place. Avoid a haphazard way. Be careful about controversies. Be cautious in your movements. Don't take decisions in suits pending in courts. Don't stand guarantor for others. Avoid travelling. Not a good week for beginning a new venture. **Good dates:** 19, 21 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 7. **Favourable directions:** North and West.



LEO (July 23 — August 22) Your words will carry weight. Take steps in the right direction. Success will ultimately come in all your ventures. Letters will bring you good news. Some will profit through speculation, betting and gambling. Generally, a good week for businessmen and professionals. Meet seniors and elders and chalk out new plans. However, someone will suddenly fall sick or expire in your family. **Good dates:** 18, 19, 21 and 23. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) The first three days are favourable for you. You may reap the harvest by your recent efforts. On the other hand you will also meet with disappointments and failures. Don't postpone replies to letters. Look seriously to the agreements and deals you have entered. Your domestic front will remain peaceful. **Good dates:** 17, 18, 19 and 23. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** North-west.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) You will have to swim against the current to succeed. You may not have enough resources to meet the expenses of your family and for maintaining your status and dignity. You will have to strive hard to get loans. Keep a watch on your health. Don't lose your balance or use harsh words. For businessmen this is the ideal period to enter into contracts. Some will get transfer orders and promotions. **Good dates:** 19, 20 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 10 and 3. **Favourable direction:** South-west.



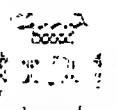
SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) A congenial atmosphere prevails throughout this week. A good week for love and matrimonial affairs. Financially, your position will improve. A good week for the middle class. The domestic front will be a source of happiness. Some will gain in speculation, betting and gambling. **Good dates:** 20, 21 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 3. **Favourable direction:** West.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) You will face problems on the financial front. Your aspirations are not likely to be fulfilled. With hard work and initiative you can turn the tide in your favour. You may suffer from severe physical and mental strain. Maintain silence at home and outside. Wait for better days. Keep away from races and clubs. You may undertake a long journey. Check extravagant tendencies. Friends may let you down. **Good dates:** 17, 18 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 9. **Favourable directions:** South and East.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Look after the health of your children. Ladies will buy new clothes and receive presents. A couple of important things are likely to get delayed. Don't feel dejected. You will have to play host to distant relatives. Some people may get transfer orders against their wishes. A good week for businessmen to acquire new stocks and enter into new agreements. **Good dates:** 17, 19, 21 and 23. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 8. **Favourable direction:** North.



AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) You are advised to remain on our guard. You need more financial resources. You will soon have a bitter experience while seeking help or loan. Many problems will become complicated for want of money. Don't go to races or clubs. Don't worry about suits pending in the court. **Good dates:** 18, 19, 21 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South.



PISCES (February 12 — March 20) The beginning of the week is full of opportunities. Meet VIPs and keep a close watch on pending law suits. Don't lend money. The home front may prove troublesome. Depend on your own intuition. **Good dates:** 17, 19, 20 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 8 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

M. B. RAMAN



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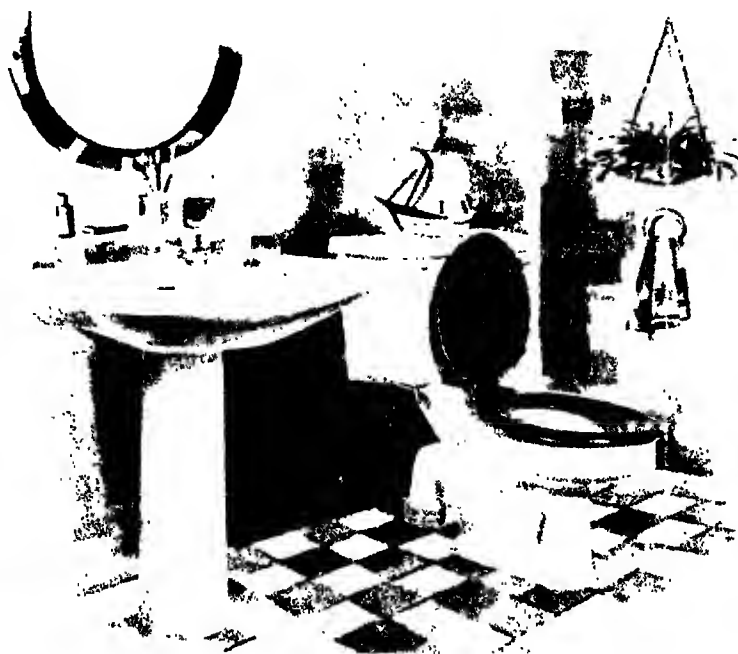
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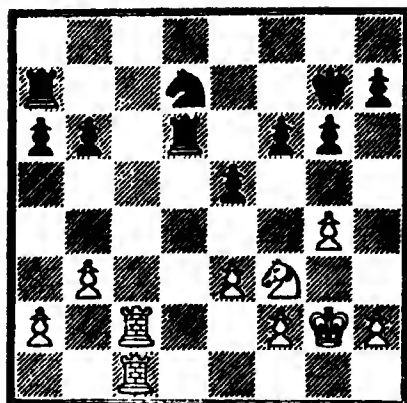
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chess

Robatsch (Black)



Andersson (White) to move

Position after Black's 21st move

HANDS UP those who have played an endgame recently. Hmm, not many. The fact is that precious few players have the opportunity to do so in most club and county matches games are sent for adjudication after 30 or 40 moves, which means that the players themselves never really get a chance to explore the dark mysteries of the endgame. In addition there are those who hold the sacrilegious belief that endgames are boring and agree a draw as soon as the queens are exchanged. This is all a great pity because many superficially simple positions are very rich in possibilities, a fact one can only really appreciate by playing them.

Undisputed master of the 'simple' position is the young Swedish grandmaster Ulf Andersson. I remember seeing Ulf play friendly games at Hastings some years ago. He would set up the pieces normally but would remove the queens (sometimes queens and rooks) from the board before playing. Needless to say, he won every game. Even in serious tournament play Ulf is always trying to simplify. With every exchange his eyes light up a little, so that by the time the board is virtually denuded of pieces his face is positively aglow. He wins nearly all his games in the ending—I cannot recall one of his opponents resigning with more than a handful of pieces still left on the board—and does so with alarming regularity. Ulf has one of the best tournament records of any player in the world this year.

I give an example of Andersson's play, taken from the big International tournament in Munich earlier this year. Note the speed with which the black pieces grind to an almost mesmeric standstill.

White: U. Andersson (Sweden). Black: K. Robatsch (Austria).

Double fianchetto opening.

1. N-KB3, N-KB3; 2. P-QB4, P-QB4; 3. P-KN3, P-QN3; 4. B-N2, B-N2; 5. O-O, P-N3; 6. P-N3, B-N2; 7. B-N2, O-O; 8. N-B3, P-Q4? If Black tries to maintain the symmetry with 8... N-B3, then 9 P-Q4 favours White. Best is 8... N-R3!

9. N x P, N x N; 10. B x B, K x B; 11. P x N, Q x P; 12. P-Q4, P x P; 13. Q x P, Q x Q; 14. N x Q, B x B; 15. K x B. Stop yawning, the

game is about to begin and White will start with a small but clear advantage. His knight is much more active than its opposite number.

15... P-QR3. To develop his rook via the back door.

16. QR-B1, R-R2; 17. R-B2, R-Q1; 18. P-K3, P-K4? A mistake. Black weakens

his pawn formation.

19. N-B3, P-B3; 20. P-KN4! A very nice move. Andersson envisages using the K4 square for his pieces and maybe one day undermining the Black KP with P-N5.

20... R-Q3; 21. KR-B1, N-Q2; (DIAGRAM) 22. R-B6! Already virtually a winning move. Black will pay dearly for his move 18... P-K4; weakening the squares along his third rank.

22... R x R; 23. R x R, K-B2; 24. N-Q2, K-K2; 25. N-K4, R-N2; 26. P-N4. To keep the black knight out of B4.

26... R-N1, Black has no constructive moves at all. 26... P-B4; 27. P x P, P x P; 28. N-N3, P-B5, 29. N-B5+ is highly unpleasant.

27. N-B3, P-B4; if he continues to wait the execution comes thus: 27... R-N2; 28. N-Q5+, K-B2; 29. Q-Q6, K-N2; 30. R-K6, K-B2; 31. R-K7+, K-N1; 32. R x N!, R x R; 33. N x P+.

28. N-Q5+, K-B2; 29. K-N3, P-KR4; 30. P x BP, P x P; 31. R-Q6, R-N2; 32. K-R4, K-N2; 33. K x P and Black resigned. The White king will walk back along the fifth rank and gobble up everything in sight.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

THE French magazine, *Le Bridgeur*, has a long-running feature, 'L'Entame de...', by José Le Dentu, the title serving as a peg for a variety of interesting deals. Recently he posed a problem concerned specifically with the lead. Your hand is:

♠ A 10 9
♥ A Q 8 5
♦ K Q 2
♣ A 7 3

You are West and the bidding goes:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
--	--	No	No
1♠	1NT	3♠	4♥
4♠	No	No	double
No	No	No	

The question is not so much 'What should West lead?' as 'Is there any conceivable reason for leading a low club?' For this is a hand with a history. Two Indonesian brothers, named Manoppo, have been under a heavy cloud since their win in a Far Eastern Championship a few years ago. This incident was widely quoted, for partner held

♠ J
♥ 9 6 4 3 2
♦ 10 8 7 5 3
♣ K 9

Obviously the lead of the low club was an outstanding success.

Le Dentu goes over the top in his commentary. 'Is there really one expert in all the world capable of finding such a lead unless he had a secret code with his partner?' he asks. And 'It is evident that this hand alone would suffice to convince a jury'.

But if the bidding is correctly recorded, what is West to make of East's double of Four Spades? He cannot have anything worth while in trumps or diamonds and he would not place any value on the King of hearts, holding a long suit. That his double is based on the King of clubs is not just likely, it is almost certain.

Pressing home, Le Dentu quotes the verdict of the panel of the American *Bridge World*. The 35 champions, so called, answered the problem as follows:

20 for the 10 of spades; 7 for the Ace of spades; 4 for the Ace of hearts; 3 for the King of diamonds; 1 for the 8 of hearts (not a bad idea, because it may give partner a

chance to lead a diamond through the Ace, making the defence easier).

If not one of the champions could see the virtue of the low club lead, more fools they!

TERENCE REESE

stamps



VISITORS to the Llechwedd slate caverns at Blaenau Ffestiniog, in North Wales, can ride on the miners' tramway through a network of tunnels and underground quarries in what was once the largest of the Welsh slate mines. As souvenirs of their visit they can also buy stamp-like publicity labels to stick on their picture postcards. Designed by Ivor Wynne Jones, of Llandudno, and priced at 5p, one of the labels shows an electric locomotive hauling a passenger train through the caverns. Another issue features Alice Liddell, who spent holidays at Llandudno, and the White Rabbit whom she followed into Wonderland. Although these Llechwedd labels have no postal validity, they are certainly of interest to collectors of Welsh philatelic ephemera. The Cinderella Stamp Club (hon sec G M Dorman, 35 Smith Street, London SW3 4EP) caters for philatelists collecting local stamps, charity seals, publicity labels and the many other 'Cinderellas' of philately.



IT IS a sobering thought that, by gently tearing down the row of perforations between these two British stamps, the owner could reduce their value from £350 to about 35p. The stamps come from a sheet intended for making into stamp booklets. As each pane of six stamps needed a margin at the left for stitching, special printing plates had to be prepared. These produced rows containing first a margin, then three stamps followed by three stamps upside down, and then another margin. As a result, the third and fourth stamps of each row were upside down in relation to each other, an arrangement known to philatelists as tête-bêche. Occasionally the tête-bêche stamps passed into circulation and this pair realised £350 at a recent Warwick and Warwick sale.

C.W. HILL



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CHAITRA-BLS-186



CHHATARPUR: A camel, a horse and a dog were imprisoned by the police, for the first time in criminal history, in connection with a dacoity, according to the Superintendent of Police, Chhatarpur. He said the dacoits had started a new method of using animals to drive away the police party pressed into action to check dacoities—*Anrta Bazar Patrika* (Tapas Gupta, Baripada)

ANANTAPUR: Sugalis, a tribal sect living in an old settlement for the past several years under insanitary conditions, have refused to take advantage of the housing scheme for the weaker under the "food-for-work" programme. A housing scheme for the weaker sections is being implemented under the programme and 5,000 houses in all the 16 panchayat samithi areas will be completed before March. Mr P. V. Chowdary, Minister for Endowments, who gave this information said the small Sugali settlement was near his native village—Nuthimadugu. He said the Sugalis believed that they would lose all their wealth and become poor if they left their old houses—*The Hindu* (K. Subbaramaiah, Kurnool)

PUNE: Twenty-eight-year-old Neelinkumar Khaire claimed to have set a world record by staying with 72 poisonous snakes for 72 hours at a stretch. The beaming business management graduate came out of a glass house containing the reptiles at 3.55 pm ending a ordeal which he undertook to prove that snakes are not man's enemies. About 70,000 visitors saw him moving freely among the reptiles, which did not harm him though they fought among themselves. He had entered the specially constructed pentagon-shaped chamber at 3.55 pm on January 20 to live with 27 monocellate cobras, 24 Russell's vipers, nine bind cellate cobras, eight banded kraits and four kraits—*The Hindu* (K.P. Andavan, Gobichettipalayam)

TIRUPATI: An unknown devotee offered Rs one lakh in ten bundles of hundred rupee currency notes on Sunday (January 13) to Sri Venkateswara at Tirumala. This was made known when sorting of day's collections was made—*Indian Express* (R. Somon, Palghat)

ALLAHABAD: A funeral procession was taken out from Bairhua locality in Allahabad after dropping one full glass of wine in the corpse's mouth. The majority of the mourners were also served with wine with the same bowl on Tuesday (January 22). This was stated to be the last wish of the deceased who had also urged that none should weep over his death—*Northern India Patrika* (Rajneesh Batra, Allahabad)

THERE might be a tendency, because of its overwhelming strength, on part of the ruling Party to be intolerant—Frank Anthony in the Lok Sabha.

AS apprehended by us, the Lok Sabha election results have encouraged criminals, who have been lying low, to surface once again—Jyoti Basu

NO state can have complete autonomy—if we do grant it, there would not be any India at all—Indira Gandhi's comment on West Bengal's demand for total autonomy

IN politics, one should take sanyas or take the right decision at the right moment—Haryana Chief Minister Bhajan Lal

WHATEVER little I have is pledged to the service of the nation—Haji Mastan

GOD didn't make me popular just to be a movie star or spend my days fishing or playing games. I think my mission is to do something good in this world—Muhammad Ali

YOU take Pakistan out of the region, and you will find that you have not one inch of soil where America can have any influence—right from Turkey down to Vietnam—General Zia-ul-Haq to American reporters

US sells out Shah to Khomeini—Headline in *Blitz*

ABEL Muzorewa is a childish bishop who does not know what he is talking about—Joshua Nkomo

TITO has always stood upright. He does not want to hang on as an invalid like (Spain's Francisco) Franco—A Yugoslav source quoted in *Newsweek*

THE study of Gandhi has become a virtual cottage industry in the last 30 years, producing schools, museums, foundations and more than 400 biographies—*Newsweek*

I CAN hit any shot I need to hit... I feel that at my best there is nobody I can't beat—Marina Navratilova

I USUALLY have nothing to say in my cartoons, so I camouflage this lack of "message" in my work by crowding my drawings with as many things and people as possible—Mario Miranda

india abroad

LONDON: Gurdev Gill left home alone one night, walked to a public telephone and tried to call her boyfriend. A normal thing for a 20-year-old single British girl to do. Gurdev, however, was Indian and in the end she was shamed into drowning herself when her family found out she had broken their strict moral code. At least 15 teenage Indians in West London have committed suicide in recent months. Official say that all were victims of the clash between eastern and western cultures and attitudes. Now worried officials are looking for ways to save the lives of young immigrants who want to live, love and marry as they choose—not as their old world families dictate. What compels young people like Gurdev to kill themselves? Often it is the prospect of marrying a man or woman they not only do not love but in many cases never actually met. For others it is wearing a sari or a turban when everyone else is dressed in jeans. Or learning about British traditions in schools and then being forced to unlearn them at home. For

some like Gurdev it is just falling in love. Since moving to England four years ago Gurdev had not been allowed to leave her home alone at least not until her marriage was arranged for 1981 to a man in India. She worked as a machinist in a dressmaking factory. Her brothers or parents accompanied her to and from work each day. Somehow somewhere in her cloistered life, Gurdev met an Englishman and fell in love with him. She probably knew it was impossible but she managed to keep the relationship a secret from everyone except a girlfriend. The last month she broke with tradition. It is still a mystery why may be she was feeling alone or frustrated enough to just want to go out and make the forbidden call. But her brother suddenly rounded up the police and saw her. Gurdev ran away. She did not go far. An hour later her brother found her floating face down in a canal near her home in the Southall section of West London.—

Northern India Patrika



HOW FAR IS THE TILT?

IS Mrs Indira Gandhi really supporting the Russians on the Afghanistan issue as is made out to be? It should be recalled that her initial reaction to the news of the Soviet acceptance of the "invitation" to their troops, was hostile. But she changed her stand later, and India is now considered to be in the Soviet camp on this question. But Mrs Gandhi is not all that pro-Soviet, and an indication of that is available in the first election issue of *Surya*, the magazine edited by her younger daughter-in-law, Maneka Gandhi. Here is the question, followed by the answer: "But don't you think it is a rather dangerous trend that another country should intervene in the affairs of a nation merely because it has been 'invited' by a

group of people?" Mrs Gandhi's reply was: "The point to be considered is the immediate objective, that is, lessening the tension so that the danger doesn't come to us also. We therefore have to ensure that whatever we say or do does not aggravate the situation".

FRESH GUEST LISTS

THE Soviet embassy in Delhi is in a fix. Before the coming of the Janata raj it used to keep in touch solely with the CPI and the Congress, and all invitations to youth conferences from the Committee of Youth Organisations of USSR (the apex body which controls all youth activities, including Komsomol) used to come to the CPI's All India Students' Federation and to the Indian Youth Congress. But in 1977 the Russians started inviting many other youth organisations, including the RSS controlled Janata Yuva Morcha. The Con-

gress (I) youth wing, in fact, was cold shouldered a little in the past months. Now the Russians are urgently making amends. It remains to be seen how Mr Sanjay Gandhi will react to the fresh invitations which have started pouring into the IYC(I) office.

REHABILITATED

PUBLIC notice was taken of the resurrection of P. S. Bhinder in the police hierarchy and his promotion as the police commissioner of Delhi. But the smaller men as usual have gone unnoticed. Sanjay Gandhi's original security guard, sub-inspector Jodh Singh, is also back in the security wing of Delhi police after having been banished from this elite force for about 21 months. Jodh Singh was taken off from the PM's personal contingent after Morarji Desai took over. But he continued to be in the security wing. He was removed from there in March 1978 when a photographer representing a West German journal was found snapping Mr Desai on the steps near Parliament House's gate no. five one day. Mr Desai asked his personal secretary, Mr Tonpe, to find out whether a photographer was allowed to be around. When Tonpe enquired from the security staff he found out that the man responsible was Jodh Singh. Then Jodh Singh's antecedents came to light and orders were passed for his immediate removal from the security wing. So off went Jodh Singh to an obscure police outpost behind Daulat Ram College in Delhi. His involvement in the Amethi shootout case along with Sanjay Gandhi had already cost him a promotion. Now a superceded Jodh Singh is back in the PM's security staff, deputed to guard Sanjay Gandhi.

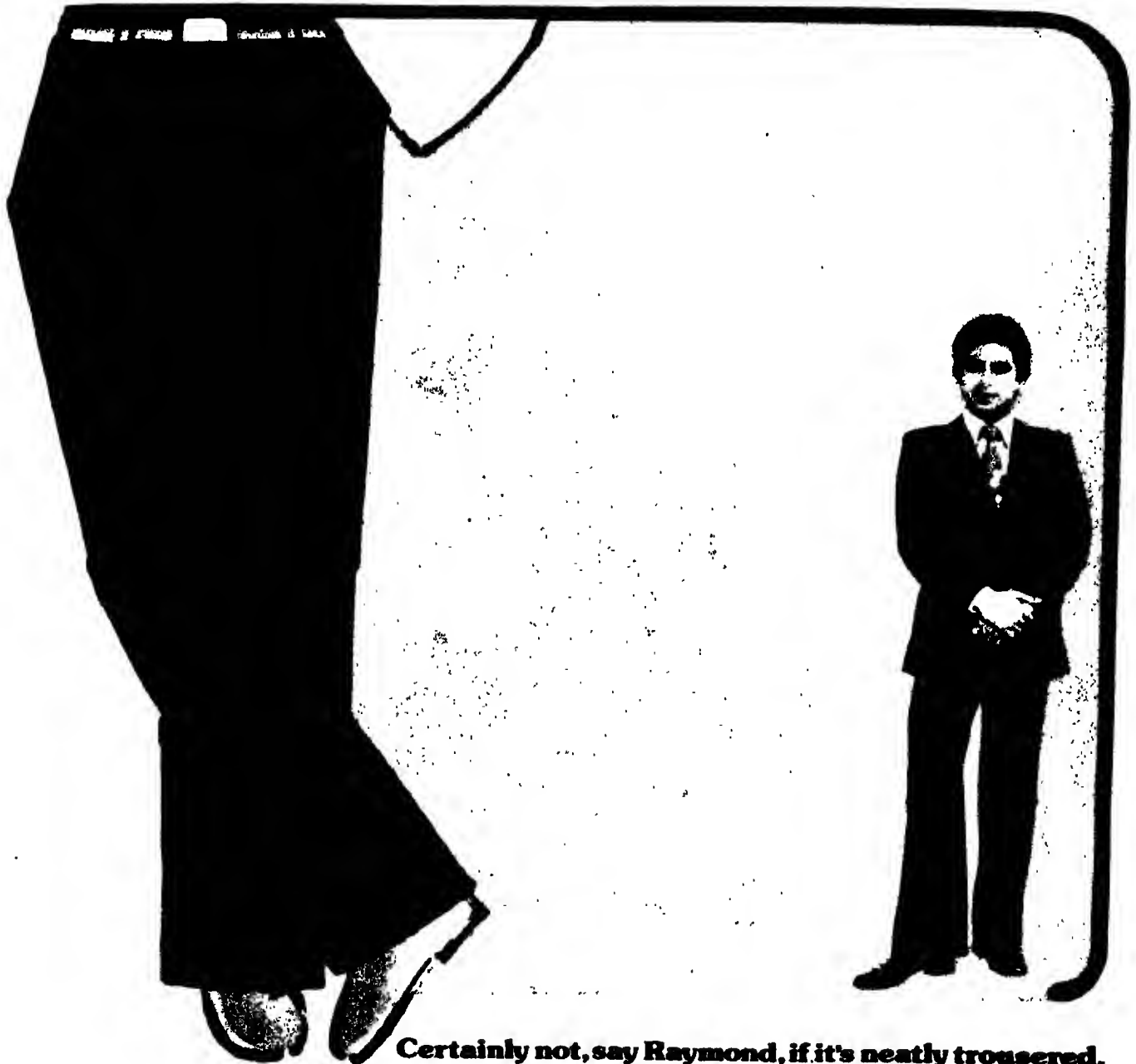
LEFTISM NO BAR

WHAT was the self-proclaimed leftist, Mr Shashi Bhushan, up to just after the change of Government at the Centre? He was contacting his friends in the Congress (I). Why? To join the bandwagon of course.

TAILPIECE: Lok Dal's Meerut district committee has a member by the name of Dharmendra Shastri. Guess who he is? Uncle of Mr Kamal Nath, MP (Congress-I) and confidante of Sanjay Gandhi.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

Should modesty prevent a large man from showing off a shapely leg?



**Certainly not, say Raymond, if it's neatly trousered.
And suggest other telling cover-ups.**

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with little or no padding, ventless jackets, a generous range of pin and pencil stripes: all convert embarrassing curves to smooth, elegant lines. Be very careful, though, about the fabric.

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SUNDAY

THE ECLIPSE



Photographed by
RAGHU RAI

**PARASBIGHA
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On the night of February 6, terror was let loose in Parasbigha village in Jehanabad subdivision of Gaya district. A band of armed men gunned down seven people and roasted alive another five. Two SUNDAY correspondents report on the Parasbigha holocaust and the retaliatory Dohiya carnage which were sparked off by a land dispute. In Bihar, the mood is one of confrontation and revenge.

A total solar eclipse occurred after a span of 82 years. RAGHU RAI was at Konerek to photograph this historic event.



When it comes to variety, there is nothing to rival the female breast. A review of Alan Brien's superb book on breasts, "Domes of Fortune". With pictures, and some samples of the author's irrepressible prose.

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The winning formula

"INDIRA'S INDIA" by M. J. Akbar (January 20) was a shrewd piece of writing. The analysis of the landslide victory of the Congress (I) under Mrs Gandhi was quite correct. There were two major factors, as the electoral coalition of women, Muslims, harijans and brahmins in addition to the so-called "charisma vote". Secondly, the electoral mathematicians failed to take into consideration the fact that Mrs Gandhi had one "caste" solidly behind her—the women. This combination of factors catapulted her from the political abyss of 1977 to the dizzy heights of unprecedented personal triumph once again. With the trust and faith reposed in her, will she belie the talks of dynastic and despotic designs?
Lt. Col. Anant Desai (Ret'd),
Jamhpur.

MRS Gandhi's victory seems to have taken everybody except the common man by surprise. Once again the media went wrong where predictions were concerned. Their assessment of the pre-poll situation was completely lopsided since they were prejudiced against Mrs Gandhi. All those claims that no Party would get an absolute majority were wishful thinking and nothing else.

The common man—so often derided—proved that he was well ahead of all the so-called intellectuals as far as his political thinking was concerned. Russell posed the same question when he said "If one man offers you democracy and another offers you a bag of rice, at what stage will you prefer rice to the other?"
T. M. Gopinathan, Madras.

AND so finally the people of this country have exploded the myth of

Babu Jagjivan Ram. The elections have proved that he is neither a national leader nor a harijan leader. One wonders in retrospect just how significant his contribution was to the landslide victory of the Janata Party in 1977. Fortunately his attempt to defect to the Congress (I) just before the election this year did not materialise. His bluff has now been thoroughly exposed.

Another myth that was punctured by this election was the myth of Devaraj Urs. He bragged that he was the undisputed leader of Karnataka and claimed that it was he who reinstated Mrs Gandhi in Indian politics. But it took the people of Karnataka to show him where he actually belongs—the dustbin of history.

This election proved one thing beyond all doubt: the reality of Indira Gandhi's charisma.
Anur Ravindran, Bangalore.

IT is the politicians who fight the elections but ultimately it is the electorate that decides between the hypocrites and those whom they consider honest. One wonders what happened to the much-vaunted J-bomb this year. Maybe it defused itself.
C. K. Apparao, Jamshedpur.

IT was a negative vote that derailed Mrs Gandhi in 1977 and it is the same negative vote that has once more put her back on the rails of power. By burying the Janata, the electorate has proved again that it is no silent spectator to the politicians' game of musical chairs where the sole prize is power. The verdict of this mid-term poll should serve as a stern warning to the Congress (I) lest it stumble into the same pitfalls.
K. S. Raman, New Delhi.

THE victory of the Congress (I) in my opinion is a blessing for the country. The overwhelming majority received by Mrs Gandhi's Party shows that the country as a whole has faith in her leadership only. She is perhaps the only person in the country who is capable of handling the reins of power fearlessly and with complete confidence. The Janata Government misplaced the trust of the people and failed to fulfil its promises. For more than two years its leaders preoccupied themselves with internecine quarrels and vacillation over comparatively minor issues.

Let us hope that Mrs Gandhi will devote her untiring energy to build up a prosperous country to lead us to a better tomorrow.
Proadpto Banerjee, Calcutta.

WHO else could have swept the polls? No one but Mrs Gandhi. To the people of India she was the only one who could give them what they needed most—a stable Government. This was reflected in the massive mandate

she received. There was no one who could rival her where charisma, resourcefulness and fearlessness were concerned. The much vaunted issue of "authoritarianism versus democracy" did not cut any ice whatever with the electorate. In their minds there was no one else but Mrs Gandhi.

The Janata deserved what it got. The Party made much of the "Emergency crimes" and in effect, it never was a single integrated Party, only a federation of various elements. Members of the Desai Cabinet quarrelled among themselves so it was surprising that they should be consigned to oblivion. From the day they took the oath at Rajghat till the day of their doom, all they did was to alienate the people. The 1980 elections should serve as an eye-opener.

B. G. V. Prasad, Bapatla.

THE election proved the capability, tenacity and veracity of Mrs Gandhi. There were some who had questioned her indispensability in the past but this election should serve as an eye-opener for them. Yes, she is indispensable. The country needed her desperately and she got a massive mandate from all quarters. Where are all those so-called political pundits now? They were the ones who predicted her political death. One wonders if they are eating their words now.

Khanna Babu G., Anakapalli.

THE huge mandate obtained by Mrs Gandhi's Party gives an indication that she has refurbished her image through her tact and sincere approach to the people. She is well aware of the fact that her ability to run the country cannot be questioned, and so is the electorate aware of this fact. She is also secure in the knowledge that no other leader in this country can hope to rival her where solving the problems of the masses is concerned.

P. Ghosh, Calcutta.

WHATEVER the ingenious post mortems being made, on the outcome of the recent Parliamentary election, what has happened is nothing short of disaster for democracy. There is no knowing whether India will be able to recover from this crippling blow administered by an erratic electorate. The voters have literally placed the country at Mrs Gandhi's feet. Will not the world mock us saying that the same India that rejoiced three years ago after freeing itself from the shackles of tyranny has now voluntarily put on the shackles again. Even if the people had decided to teach the warring Janta leaders a lesson, the best thing for them to have done was to have voted for a coalition, or the Leftist Parties.
K. Kumara Sekhar, Eluru.

Back to the backlash

"HINDU backlash: what happened?" by Kewal Varma (January 20) is relevant as it goes to the root cause of communalism and, of course, suggests its most effective solution. Since Independence the problems of Muslims have been projected as "special" problems, quite distinct and different from their Hindu brothers. This has proved disastrous for Muslims as well as the country. Had the Muslims realised the inextricability of their problems—poverty, disease, ignorance, etc.—with the problems of the country as a whole and, of course, their mutual solution the country could not have been in the present communal morass. Not only Muslim leaders but the national leaders as well are to blame for the awareness among both Hindus and Muslims that they have common problems. Even in matters of their "special" problems, which the author has not touched on, the above holds good though not totally. Muslims should try to win the support of Hindus by impressing upon them the genuineness of their demands. But their attitude has been unfortunately imprudent. While projecting their "special" problems—Urdu, AMU, personal law, etc.—before the Government they antagonised the Hindus who, in turn, started pressuring the Government to turn down their demands.

Shahab Quamr, Patna.

A generalisation

I strongly condemn the view expressed by Olga Tellis in the article, "Bombay, Janata's island" (January 20) that it was the traders, shopkeepers, slum dasas, profiteers, hoarders and black-marketeers who tilted the scales in favour of the Janata candidates in Bombay. You have thus insulted the thousands of Bombayites like me, who genuinely resent Sanjay Gandhi's open contempt for rule of law and his mother's dictatorial tendencies, and hence voted for the Janata Party in spite of its non-performance.

V. P. Ramanathan, Bombay.

Frank portrayal

I AM afraid that articles like "Was this a dangerous election?" by David Selbourne (January 20) will become a rarity with the political rehabilitation of Mrs Gandhi and her son. As a non-Indian the author has understood the political situation in the country.

Koneti, Cuttack.

DAVID SELBOURNE has presented a true and comprehensive picture of the Indian situation. The recent verdict should prove to the rivals of Mrs Gandhi that tall talk cannot bear fruit. A strong common sense is needed to govern the country.

D. payan Ghosh, 24 Parganas.

Gracious in defeat

M. J. AKBAR's interview with the Janata Party president Mr Chandra Shekhar "By the end of 1980, people will be disillusioned with Mrs Gandhi" (January 20) was elaborate and interesting. I cannot but admire the confident leader for his humility in accepting the failure of the Janata Government and for explaining the reasons for his Party's debacle in the elections. The Janata would have had better results if it had more leaders like him. I endorse his views that Mrs Gandhi has learnt nothing from the past and she will continue to behave in the same way.

R. Bhaskaran, Tiruchirappalli.

THE interview with Chandra Shekhar was excellent. He is the one leader who can analyse the real reasons for his Party's debacle. One hopes, at least now, the leaders should face reality and arrive at a consensus to try to build a nationwide network as quickly as possible.

H. Mohamed Jam, Madras.

IT is wishful thinking on the part of Mr Chandra Shekhar when he says that by the end of 1980 the people will be disillusioned with Mrs Gandhi. Mrs Gandhi has a two-thirds majority now and she has what it takes to run a Government effectively. The Emergency and its excesses have be-

No reply ?

WE wait to hear what C. R. Irani was to say about, "Is the Statesman a banana republic?" by Tooshar Pandit (January 20) in defence of journalists like Pran Chopra, Kuldip Nayar, Desmond Doig, Sumanta Banerjee, S. Viswam, Raghu Rai, N. J. Nanporia and S. Nihal Singh leaving the institution.

Bimal Kumar Parkash, Calcutta.

IT is only when someone of the stature of Mr S. Nihal Singh falls that we journalists suddenly discover that editors have no freedom and that India has no "freedom of the Press". S. C. Ananthraman in "The editor's independence disappeared long ago" (January 20) refers to the dismissal of some journalists from *The Statesman* but because they happened to be small fry, nobody bothered about them. I was also the victim of a similar witch-hunt in the Indian Press—dismissed from the *Indian Express*, Bangalore, in April 1979 as a senior correspondent on the charge that I wrote articles for other papers. My plea that I possessed the "written permission" of the editor-in-chief and that I had stopped writing after the show-cause was served was not heeded. My colleagues never protested. Mr Nihal Singh is indeed one of our greatest editors but he is also a victim of the peculiar situation in which the Indian Press is placed. The Press in India is owned by big business houses which wants to perpetuate the "class" status

come irrelevant in the context of the decisive mandate that has swept her back to power. The Janata simply could not function and the people are no fools to be taken in by fantastic promises.

We shall have law and order, peace and steady progress during the next five years.

K. Narayan, Madras.

AFTER the Janata Party had been voted to power unexpectedly in the 1977 Lok Sabha polls the old leaders captured, power and destroyed the basic image of the Party. Mr Chandra Shekhar has a good base among the youth and youth power might be the only alternative to the Congress (I) led by Mrs Gandhi.

Bhaskar, Patna.

MR CHANDRA SHEKHAR deserves to be congratulated for his frank and thoughtful observation. Although I agree with his views on the political situation in the country I fail to comprehend his ideas about Morarji Desai. He says that he was critical of Morarji Desai in the beginning but became sympathetic towards him on a personal level when he found that Mr Desai was out to destroy himself and his Party. Mr Chandra Shekhar should accept his share of the responsibility. Had he acted on time he could have saved the Party from disintegration.

Anil Kumar Ojha, Motihari.

quo. And it is manned by upper caste journalists who want to continue the "caste" status quo. Both aim at the same end and also, collaborate effectively. Without breaking this stranglehold we can expect no "freedom of the Press" in India.

V. T. Rajshekhar Shetty, Bangalore.

S. C. Ananthraman, the ex-General Secretary of the Statesman Journalists Association has written about the resignation of S. Nihal Singh. But has it been noticed by the managing director, Mr C. R. Irani? It is not only the departure of Mr Nihal Singh, the best political correspondent of recent times that makes me sad about the state of affairs with *The Statesman*, but the series of departures of most successful editors in quick succession. Perhaps the circulation of *The Statesman* will not decline but readers who care about the quality of their reading matter must start thinking otherwise.

Tapen Das, Calcutta.

MR Nihal Singh's exit from *The Statesman* is another chapter in the history of management versus the editorial staff. But it is not merely a matter of individuality. The point is: what exactly are the powers and responsibilities of an editor? Mr Singh says that an editor should be free to edit a paper within the ambit of its proclaimed policies. But does an editor really maintain it without overstepping his limits? The same can be said of the management.

R. K. Gulati, Siliguri.



PARASBIGHA,
DOHIYA

It was both, a class and a caste war. The upper caste landlord bhumihars attacked Parasbigha at midnight on February 6, killing the backward castes and destroying their huts and animals. The dispute was over land, and the bhumihars had been encouraged by the victory of their candidate in the Lok Sabha polls. Two days later, the backward castes, led by the yadavs, took revenge and plundered the bhumihars of Dohiya. SAUMITRA BANERJEE and ARUN RANJAN reconstruct the gruesome beginning of another phase of the caste and class war that threatens to send Bihar into terrible flames.

A CRY O TERROR



Photographs by KRISHNA MURARI KISHAN

The origin

ON the morning of October 28, 1979, Ram Niranjan Sharma, a rich bhumihar landlord of Parasbigha village in Jehanabad sub-division of Gaya district finished his prayers and left his house to call his men to start work in the fields. It was a chilly morning and he wrapped his shawl around him. Finding no one around his house, he went towards the arhar (pulse) fields and started calling out to his men. Suddenly, two men emerged from the fields and before Sharma realised what was happening, one of them pulled him down. Then, in one brutal move, one of the men beheaded him with a sickle and the two made off with Sharma's severed head. Hearing her father's cry, the dead man's daughter rushed out of the house, clutching a gun, to find what had happened. When she arrived at the edge of the arhar fields she saw her father's beheaded body lying in a pool of blood. Sharma's head was never recovered. That night, in front of her father's body, Ram Niranjan Sharma's daughter declared that her family would avenge her father's death.

The same day an FIR was lodged with the Jehanabad police station. The police conducted a search, and the sickle with which Sharma was suspected to have been beheaded, was discovered in Suresh Paswan's house. Suresh is a resident of Paras-



A baby cries in the courtyard of Ram Swaroop's house in Parasbigha. Ram Swaroop was shot by the gangsters

bigha village. Twelve others were accused, including Sukhdeo Bhagat, a gareria.

A small village four kms from Jehanabad, located right of the Jehanabad-Gaya Road, Parasbigha is in the Naurigram panchayat under the Jehanabad police station. To the north of the village flows the river Dardha. This area is largely dominated by the backward castes and is a CPI stronghold. It is also notorious for its high crime rate and considerable proliferation of illegal arms. Most families in Parasbigha belong to the backward castes: yadavs, garerias, beldars, harijans (including dusads and musahars) and Muslims. There is only one family in Parasbigha belonging to the forward caste—the bhumihar family of Ram Niranjan Sharma. With the exception of eight families, most of the others are either landless or marginal farmers cultivating small plots of land. Niranjan Sharma's family owns 52 bighas (37 acres). Behind his acquisition of this land is a short history.

About 40 years ago the zamindar of Tekari (Gaya district), who owned 52 bighas in Parasbigha, gifted this land to Ganesh Lal, the patwari of the Tekari raj. Ganesh Lal, who used to stay in Sarthua, two kms from Parasbigha, found it difficult to cultivate the land on his own and decided to employ sharecroppers to till it. Later, Ganesh Lal decided to shift over to Parasbigha and till the land himself. The sharecroppers refused to move. Not having the necessary manpower to evict the sharecroppers, Ganesh Lal contacted Ram Niranjan Sharma, a bhumihar who lived in Akhuri village under Pali police station, and asked him to come to Parasbigha and forcibly occupy the land. But he placed a condition: out of the 52 bighas of land, Niranjan

Sharma would have to give Ganesh Lal the entire produce from five bighas. Niranjan agreed, and in 1957 came to Parasbigha, forcibly occupied the land and evicted the sharecroppers.

After some time, however, Niranjan stopped giving Ganesh Lal the produce from the five bighas, realising Ganesh Lal would be unable to take any action against him. Frustrated and angry, Lal went to a big landlord of Pandui, a neighbouring village, and sold the land to him. This set off a legal battle between Niranjan and Jatti Singh, as Niranjan refused to move from the

land, which he claimed was his. The case went up to the Supreme Court, which gave its verdict in favour of Jatti Singh. Despite the Court's verdict, Sharma did not give up the land. Failing to get possession, Jatti Singh allotted the land for sharecropping to the landless harijans and yadavs of the village, which resulted in clashes between the backwards and Niranjan Sharma's musclemen and created tension in the area. Sharma in fact told Jatti Singh that "I don't recognise the Supreme Court. The real judgement will take place in the 'gun court'".

Sharma then started terrorising the backward peasants in the area. For example in 1958 he was involved in a harijan murder case. He was sentenced to life imprisonment by the district sessions court but later acquitted by the Patna High Court. In 1961, he was charged for assaulting a harijan woman but was acquitted by the district sessions court.

But it is not here that Niranjan Sharma's record of forcibly capturing land ends. He was involved in forcibly occupying government land in Parasbigha also. According to official records, the river Dardha gradually changed its course and an area of nine acres emerged (plot no 168), which originally formed part of the river bed. Of this land Niranjan's wife, Navrati Devi, occupied and started cultivating a part. The villagers then complained to a camp court in Parasbigha that Mrs Sharma had claimed three acres of land to be hers. As a result, proceedings were initiated from the office of the sub-Divisional Officer, Jehanabad, against the encroachment and after an inquiry, she was asked to vacate the land. The rest of this land (six acres) was being cultivated by harijans and backwards. This land too was claimed by the Ram Niranjan

After the violence.



Sharma, who started terrorising them. As the matter was brought to the notice of the authorities, section 144, (imposed when there is apprehension of breach of peace and the parties concerned are prevented from entering the land) was promulgated. Sharma claimed another piece of Government land plot no 94, which is next to plot no 168. On a part of this land, the harijans had set up their houses. The local administration looked into this matter and after an inquiry, the government granted settlement rights to eight harijan families. This angered Sharma. The Government too had issued settlement rights to backward and harijan people in two other plots (numbers

117 and 113) which had been occupied by Niranjana Sharma, and issued orders to Sharma to vacate these plots. At this Sharma took the issue to the court and obtained a stay order.

It was over the Government land that the animosity between Niranjana Sharma and the backwards sharpened. At around the same time, Sukhdeo Bhagat, a gareria, who was a beneficiary of the government land, emerged as a leader among the backwards. Popularly referred to as 'Masterji', he is an educated man and all legal matters are referred to him. In spite of the Government orders, Sharma continued to violate them.

Bhumihar women of Dohiya sitting beside the Jehanabad-Gaya Road where they had managed to escape the mob



He violated section 144 on October 8, 1979, and opened fire. Ultimately, the police had to arrive to control the situation. A case was filed against him under the arms act and acts 147, 148, 149, and 324 IPC. Another case was lodged against Niranjana Sharma under 188 IPC for violation of 144 CrPC. On October 14 a case was lodged against Sharma for assaulting a villager, Pairu Bhagat. Finally, the SDO, Jehanabad, recommended action against Sharma under the Bihar Crime Control Ordinance. But before any action could be taken, Sharma was murdered on October 28. Police were posted at Parasbigha the day he died.

After the death of Niranjana Sharma, his grandsons, Shyam Sundar and Krishna Deo began looking after the fields. Niranjana Sharma's son, Madan Mohan Sharma, a security officer to the Mines Minister of Bihar, Thakur Prasad Singh, lived in Patna and occasionally visited Parasbigha. When he did so, the bhumihars of the surrounding villages gathered at his house for meetings. The land dispute cases pending with the court continued. Sukhdeo Bhagat became more vocal and at meetings held in his verandah, told the people of the need to oppose the oppression of the bhumihars. Jatti Singh's family in Pandul, too, started making claims on the 52 bighas of land they owned in Parasbigha. An uneasy tension prevailed. It was only the presence of the police picket which prevented the tension from escalating.

But with the announcement of date of the elections the police picket was removed on December 19 for election duty. The bhumihars backed the Congress(I) candidate, Mahendra Prasad. Mahendra Prasad's victory was a psychological boost for the bhumihars, leaving the antagonist backwards insecure. Sukhdeo Bhagat made a request for the posting of police personnel. But, according to the SP, Jehanabad, a magistrate maintained a daily record of the situation in Parasbigha and found that it was normal and there was no need for a police picket in Parasbigha.

The attack

IN the moonlit night of February 6, around 11 pm, a group of armed people approached Parasbigha. Reaching the village, they bolted the doors of every house and set them on fire—sparing only the houses of the musahars, Muslims and one bhumihar family. As the flames leapt up and swallowed the thatched roofs, the people trapped inside awoke and tried desperately to escape. But even as they did this, the attackers who had taken up positions outside began firing shots at them. Many were injured,

some fell dead. The cattle tethered to the houses were burnt alive. It was a brutal carnage. The attack lasted for roughly an hour, after which the assailants escaped into the darkness. By the end of the attack, 11 people, including several women and two children, lay dead. One succumbed to injuries in hospital the next day.

On February 7, Parasbigba looked devastated, smoke rising from the burnt huts, charred and bullet-ridden bodies lying around, wails ringing the air. The DM got to know about the incident over the telephone at 9 am the next morning, and police turned up at 11 am. The DM appeared with a contingent of CRP men. The people, furious and emotion-charged, said they wouldn't allow any of the dead bodies to be removed until the Chief Minister or the Inspector General of Police came to see what had happened. Later the same day, after the corpses had stayed untouched for about ten hours, police finally managed to carry them away at 9.30 pm.

Hari Bhagat, a bitter gareria, spoke with tears in his eyes: "We were sleeping when some people came and set fire to our house. Some who managed to escape were shot down and were thrown into the fire again". A stunned ten-year-old boy, Krishna Deo, had an even more pathetic story of love and sacrifice to relate: he had tried pushing open one of the smaller doors of his hut while it was afire, and succeeded, only to find the brute killers waiting outside. As they cocked their guns, his sister, aware of the danger, threw herself above him to save his life. The shots were fired, killing her instantly. Krishna Deo escaped to the nearby garlic fields and took cover. He also lost his father and mother in the mass killing. Phuleshwari Devi knew nothing about what was happening, until she felt the heat inside her hut. Looking up, she saw her roof on fire. Grabbing her two infants with both arms, she rushed to the main door and found it blocked. Then she tried her side door, carefully pushed it open, and saw to her horror an armed person standing outside. Scared, she shut the door, and built a platform high enough for her to stand on and scale a wall. This she did, and eventually ran across to the cultivation, where she hid. She was luckier than her own brother Ram Swarup, who was shot while sleeping in the verandah of another house. "This is the work of the bhumibars, the people who oppress the landless and the poor," Phuleshwari sobbed.

A special target for butchery was the house of the emerging leader Sukhdeo Bhagat. Inflammable oil was poured over his thatched roof, and set on fire. Members of his terrified family who had come out in fear were thrown back into the flames. Those who were sleeping in the courtyard

tried to jump out after scaling the wall. Jump they did — only to their death. They were shot at from point blank range. Though Sukhdeo himself was fortunate to have got away, five members of his family were killed.

In the FIR, which was lodged with the Jehanabad Police Station, 51 persons were accused, including Niranjana Sharma's son, Madan Moban.

The revenge

On hearing of the massacre, an angry crowd, of backwards, began converging on Parasbigba on the morning of the 8th, and tried to attack the house of Niranjana Sharma, the police said. The mob,

according to a report of the Commissioner to Chief Secretary, was chased away. They had only succeeded in setting fire to a haystack. They had also tried to loot the food that was being supplied as relief by the government to the affected families. Unable to succeed, the mob broke in two, one of the two sections headed for Dohia, which is about a kilometre and a half away. This was around 9 am.

The Circle Officer, Parasbigba, noticing part of the retreating group moving towards Dohia, decided to forewarn the police at Jehanabad, the subdivisional headquarters, under which police station Dohia falls. He informed the local CRP post, which conveyed the warning to their Jehanabad counterparts by a wireless message routed via Chandauli (Jehanabad and Par-



asbigha have no direct wireless link). Alerted subsequently, the Jehanabad ASP, Mr Verma, went in a party towards Dohia.

When he reached the outskirts of the village, Mr Verma saw a large number of women and children rushing towards the main road. Among them were a number of men who were making away with goods they had looted. They were pursued by the police, and four of them were arrested. Inside the village the police found the houses plundered, and many injured. Those in serious condition were rushed to hospital, while others were laid on the road to be taken later. Among the former was an old woman who had been thrown

from the roof of her two-storied house, and who later succumbed to her injuries.

Dohia has 13 bhumihar, four yadav, 15 to 16 mushahar and four Muslim families. A member of the bhumihar community, an old man, Chandra Deo Singh, gave his version of what had happened at Dohia on the 8th. Early in the morning, he said, the police had come and arrested a number of young men, suspecting them of participating in the Parasbigha attack. Other young men, apprehending the arrests, had fled. After the arrests were over there were no bhumihar males left in the village save two old men.

Around 9 am the villagers, seeing the marauders approaching, had locked themselves up in their houses. The women even started throwing stones at the attackers from the roofs, taking up the challenge. Stone-throwing, from both sides went on for some time till the attackers forced open the doors of the houses and began looting. They abused, and in some cases molested the women. Among the first houses to be attacked was that of Mithilesh Singh. During the disturbances, the yadavs of the village are said to have cooperated in attacking the bhumihars.

Broken doors, scattered books, empty lockers, were a few of the remnants of the violence and looting. Even cots and other furniture were carried away or destroyed. Two rudraksha malas, and a small flower pot were all that remained of another house. Blood-stains could be seen on the roofs and walls of a number of houses. Seventeen people, all of them bhumihar women and children, were injured, and an old woman, Deomati Devi, was pushed from the roof of her house, and died in hospital. Women residents of Dohia say they heard the attackers shout while looting: "Parasbigha ko dard nahi hota tha kya?" (Did it not also pain Parasbigha?)

Ram Swaroop's wife sits desolate after the death of her husband



The aftermath

COULD THE DOHIA incident have been prevented? Dohia is within visible distance of Parasbigha and the incident occurred in broad daylight. Yet the police were not aware of it till the afternoon. According to the SP, Jehanabad, "On the morning of February 8, people were pouring in from all over the area and there was a big crowd. In the commotion we did not either hear or see anything. We were minding the crowd in Parasbigha".

As soon as news of the Parasbigha incident spread, politicians from Patna started arriving on the scene. The first to arrive was Karpoori Thakur, who arrived on the morning of February 8. As a matter of fact it was after the visit of Karpoori Thakur that the Dohia incident occurred. The Congress (I) immediately charged Thakur with playing politics. Kamal Nath Thakur of the Congress (I) said: "The Dohia incident occurred at Karpoori Thakur's instigation. By giving this incident a caste colour, he wants to get the votes of the backwards." Karpoori Thakur is already the most powerful leader of the backward castes in Bihar.

In an interview to SUNDAY, Karpoori Thakur replied: "I don't believe in such methods. Why should I try to get the support of the backward castes only? To try to save myself from isolation, I try and gather mass support, not just (the support) of some particular castes. People

SUNDAY SPECIAL

THERE'S THIS OLD story of how the mythological demon Rahu, furious with Surya and Chandra for helping his godly foe Vishnu find the nectar of eternal youth, reached to the sky and grabbed the sun and the moon with his ugly hands. The story which scientists tell us is the earth moves around the sun, the moon around the earth, and when the moon comes between the sun and the earth, the sun is eclipsed. Two ways of explaining a solar eclipse, as popular and different as religion is from science. But surely, both schools of thought are

agreed about one thing — the splendour of a solar eclipse.

For the 300-odd people watching the February 16 total solar eclipse from Konarak's ancient Sun Temple, such was the consensus. The brilliant solar corona, a magnificent orange halo in what seemed a night sky flashed forth and remained in view for a total of 92 seconds. The flash came as a surprise as most people were still straining to look at the sun's waning crescent through sun masks of all descriptions. Many even chose not to look at the sun, duly warned by umpteen radio and newspaper warnings, and stretched out lazily under the trees. At the end of the 92 seconds, the halo disappeared in another blinding flash, as though some heavenly magician was playing a mighty trick. Such was the beauty of the halo—which many call the diamond ring—that many thought there was nothing to watch after it had gone. Few saw the rest of the eclipse with the same interest as they saw the first half and totality.

People, first in tens and then scores, began streaming into the Sun Temple's lawns from midday on February 16. A boy in half pants ran about trying to sell exposed negative films for Rs two each. The eclipse was on everyone's mind, and many were keen to

THE ECLIPSE

RAGHURAI went to the Sun Temple at Konarak to photograph the eclipse.

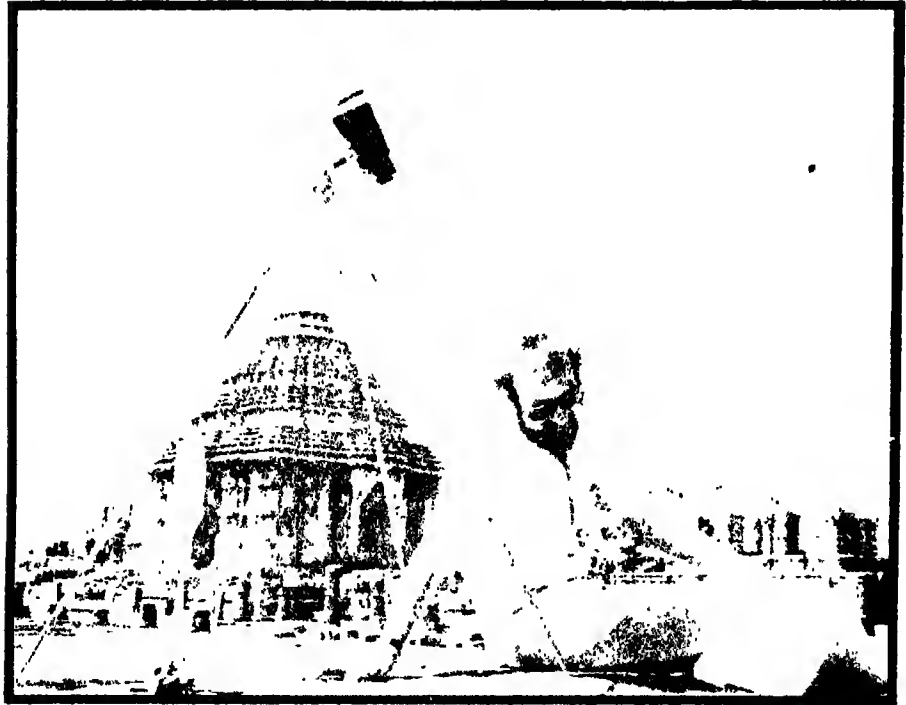
Text by NIRMAL MITRA



see what it looked like despite repeated public warnings. The choice of the Sun Temple was an obvious one : it was actually built by King Narasimha Dev I to serve as a solar observatory of sorts. It faces east, and has standing images of the holy trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva facing south.

west and north respectively. The statues are placed in such positions that the sun, when it is morning is directly ahead of Brahma, at midday above Vishnu and while setting faces Shiva.

The temple has a close association with the solar eclipse, which is even symbolised by a devilish



grinning image of the planet Rahu, in a small room for worship at one corner of the compound. With the moon's crescent in his right hand and the sun in his left, Rahu's rage is said to have an evil influence on the fortunes of men and nations, hence also the eclipse. A priest at Puri's Jagannath Temple said the February 16 eclipse, like all lunar and solar eclipses, was a result of earthly sin accumulated for years. It was hence important to guard oneself adequately against Rahu's bad influence.

The ritual for observance varies from caste to caste. A brahmin is said to be polluted by an eclipse exactly the same way as he is by the touch of a lowly chandal (harijan). He is thus required to avoid eating — the food will not be digested by a polluted constitution—during the course of the eclipse. While the actual eclipse started at Konarak from about 2.20 pm, the religious almanac said it would start at 2.36 in the morning! No one should touch food from then till the eclipse ended in the evening, around 5.30 pm, the almanac said. As for brahmins, they should sing kirtans, and recite from the Puranas to atone for their sins and those of others. At the end of it all they should bathe, offer worship and then eat. With the puja, the brahmins should distribute food — first among the lowly and then, only later, among brahmins. For brahmins had a

responsibility to the other castes. Other castes were to avoid eating, except the sick and old, who could be given sweets and water during the evil spell, but all should make it a point to offer puja to atone for their sins.

At the Jagannath temple special all-night kirtans, and bonfires of sticks, called akhanda deep, to scare away Rahu and his evil friends, were arranged, while the temple was itself closed to public. Buses stopped plying from 11 am between Puri and Bhubaneswar. Thanks to the distorted word of mouth, most people were given to understand that the total eclipse should not be seen. Two visiting astronomers from America, Bob Berman and Alan Friedman, dismissed these fears: "A lot of people here believe that the corona (the sun's outermost layer) is harmful to look at. This is incorrect. In fact, astronomers everywhere use magnifying equipment to watch it. It is absolutely safe to look at the corona, visible at totality. In fact, it is something that should be seen. But it is harmful to look at the partial eclipse, because of ultra violet rays. For this, it is best to look through folded exposed negative, for not more than a few seconds at a stretch. The ultra violet rays can damage the retina and cause a disease retinitis. Unfortunately, many believe they should not look at the totality. It is a pity so many people would be missing such a beautiful sight".





Tremors of fear

DID the earth tremors which rocked various areas in north India early on the morning of February 14, have anything to do with the solar eclipse? No, say most weather scientists. Dr H. M. Choudhury, head of the Department of Seismology, in the Meteorological office in Delhi, was categorical about the connection between earthquakes and solar eclipses. "According to all available data, there is no significant evidence that a solar eclipse is necessarily accompanied with earthquakes", Dr Choudhury said.

What many people don't realise is that there is not a single day that passes in the world without some earth tremor being recorded. So, if there are earth tremors during an eclipse it could well be just a coincidence", Dr Choudhury said. The seismologist said that according to his findings there is no indication that the earth is more prone to earthquakes during an eclipse. "Astrologers might try to cash in on the situation but if we go by strictly scientific evidence, the earth tremors on the morning of January 14, was the result of a fairly severe quake about 750 kilometres north of Delhi near the Ladakh-China border" Dr Choudhury said that this Himalayan region was generally prone to earthquakes and there was

"nothing at all unusual about the whole thing."

While scientists tend to scoff at any attempt to correlate the solar eclipse and the earth tremors, astrologers are predicting a massive earthquake that could wipe out the world. The tremors had come at a particularly opportune time... in the wake of a prediction made by a leading astrological magazine that the February 16 eclipse will be accompanied by earthquakes in China, Iran and India. After the tremors rocked Delhi, Meerut, Chandigarh, Jullundur and other northern cities, astrologers were busy predicting another far more massive earthquake which they said might end the world.

There are various astrological interpretations of the connection between the eclipse and the earthquake. The more traditional ones claim that according to Indian mythology, the time cycle of the present Kaliyuga has now reached its end with the solar eclipse. This would mean the complete destruction of the world after strange and grotesque phenomena like earthquakes and the skies raining blood. The more modern astrologers tried to link the eclipse with the disturbed political situation in the world and predict that the earthquake will actually be the re-

sult of a nuclear war between the USA and the Soviet Union.

Traditional or modern, astrologers have obviously more credence than scientists, since in large parts of the capital and towns in north India, there was considerable panic among the people, particularly the poorer and illiterate sections. "I am positive that the whole earth will rise and eat us all up", said Kasturi, a sweepers from one of the resettlement colonies in Delhi. Another person, a peon in a Government department said that he was so terrified at the tremors which rocked his windows and doors that he got under his bed and spent the rest of the night there fearing that the roof would fall down on him. He said he was particularly frightened since the day before, the local pandit had made gloomy predictions about earthquakes that would engulf half the population of the world. The peon was slightly relieved after he found his roof intact. But he was apprehensive about another earthquake which may not be so slight. This panic among the people has been fuelled by the constant warnings on the radio about the dangers of looking at the sun during the eclipse.

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Why Russia fears Islam

By JOHN BESEMERES

THE Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has been widely viewed in the West as an expression of arrogant and ambitious expansionism. However, any suggestion of Hitlerian panache would be misplaced. The Soviet leaders' interest in Afghanistan — and in Iran — is more defensive than offensive, their expansionism more geriatric than youthfully swashbuckling. This is not to suggest that their activities should be condoned, or that they are anything other than dangerous and undesirable in every respect. But it is important to remember that the USSR is a European-dominated colonial empire, which faces a severe and growing threat to its survival from its own Asian population. The recent manoeuvres are far more likely to have been inspired by anxiety than by exuberance.

Western observers have tended to regard the Soviet presence in Central Asia as beneficial to the natives. Stalinist atrocities in other parts of the USSR are more widely remembered; and there may be an unconscious inclination to wink an understanding, colonial, Eurocentric eye. In fact, the Stalinist phase was in most respects catastrophic for the Central Asians. Their religion was ferociously suppressed. Their own unrepresentative 'national communist' elites were first thrust upon them and then liquidated, to be replaced by others even less representative and even more subservient to the Georgian tyrant from Moscow.

Collectivisation of reluctant farmers and nomads often proceeded with considerable savagery. The total numbers of the highly fecund Kazakhs, for example, actually declined significantly between the 1926 and 1939 censuses. During World War II many Central Asians readily joined units organised by the Nazis to fight against their Russian 'big brothers'.

On the plus side, there has been considerable economic development (though facile comparisons with Muslim countries over the border usually forget that the development is concentrated in the larger towns where Slav immigrants have generally been politically and economically dominant). Perhaps more notably, there has been a remarkable educational transformation and one in which the native Turkic languages have been guaranteed an important place despite their often humble status at the outset of the Soviet period.

At the same time, advances in public health and sanitation have had a significant impact on the birth rate. Since 1950, most Muslim groups in the USSR have been increasing by roughly three per cent a year — a rate which can double the population in a generation. Though fertility is declining in some areas, it is still very high, and in any case, the markedly youthful age structure of the Muslim population will ensure that for several decades to come they will outstrip the growth of European groups within the USSR whose fertility is now near or below replacement levels. It is this imbalance

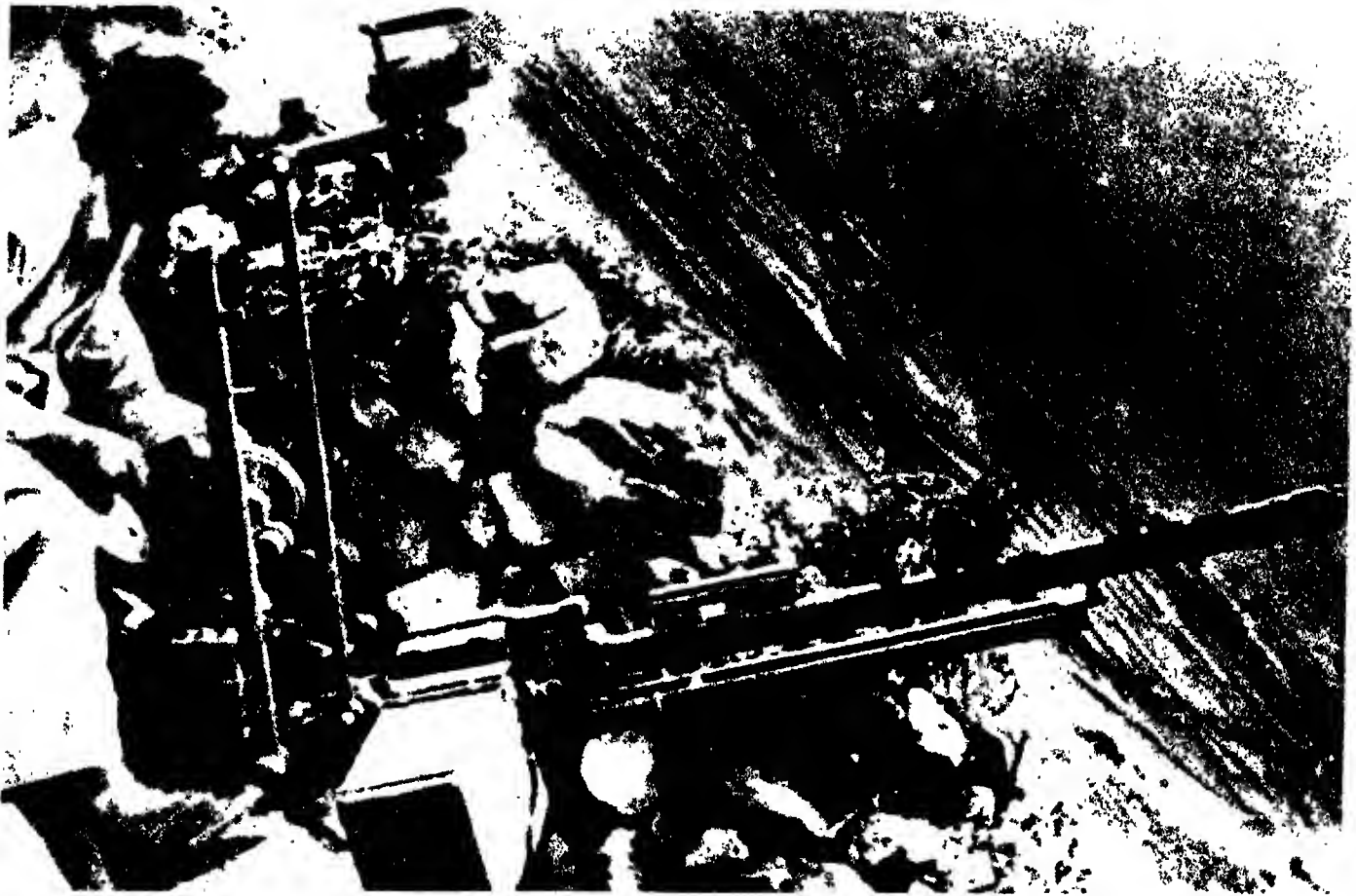
which most threatens the stability of the Soviet Union.

The results by nationality of the recent Soviet census have not yet been published. But in 1970 there were 129 million Russians, 40.8 million Ukrainians and 9.1 million Belorussians. Together these three Slav groups made up 74.6 per cent of the population, down from 77.1 per cent in 1959 at the previous census. The Muslim people concentrated in Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus region totalled some 35 million, an increase of more than 40 per cent from 24.8 million in 1959. If current trends are projected forward to the year 2000 in a manner relatively favourable to the Russians (and allowing for a substantial decline in Muslim fertility) one can expect that the Russians will by then number roughly 150-155 million. Meanwhile, the Muslims at 65-70 million, will have grown in strength from 14.5 per cent of the Soviet population in 1970, to somewhere between 20 and 25 per cent by 2000.

Other achievements of the Soviet administration — in economic and educational fields — may similarly rebound and enhance the effect of demographic changes. Urbanised Muslims, in particular, are likely to gather strength and confidence as their natural ethnic sympathies are nurtured by education in their own tongue and by some of the outer trappings of sovereignty. The authorities may soon have cause to wonder whether dialectical materialism and Soviet patriotism afford a sufficient

Russian tanks patrolling outskirts of Kabul





Rebel with anti-aircraft gun in Afghanistan

defence against the lures of ethnic and sectarian passions.

The consequences of these trends will be weightier than the bare figures at first suggest. European USSR is currently experiencing a severe labour shortage. In the 1980s, the sharply declining Slav birthrate of the 1960s will echo in the labour force, accentuating the existing labour shortage to near-crisis level. Soviet economic growth in the past has been of the extensive type; relying on new labour inputs. It has been predicted that when these dry up (as they are now), growth will also shrivel.

In the Muslim areas, by contrast, the very high birth and survival rates since the Second World War have been building up a massive labour surplus. The size of the potential work force has probably been increasing by more than four per cent per annum, and will go on doing so for the foreseeable future. To provide sufficient employment, a massive programme of investments should have been launched years ago. In fact, Soviet investments favour Central Asia only marginally — not enough to guarantee that rates of growth per capita will equal those in other parts of the USSR. Rural underemployment is massive and growing. Urban unemployment is restrained for the present by the relatively modest representation in towns of Muslim peoples; and of course it is not publicly acknowledged.

ed. But as country-to-town migration is squeezed into greater vigour by the population pressures in the countryside, there is bound to be extensive (if covert) unemployment in towns, and growing interethnic competition for jobs.

As economic life in Central Asian towns is largely run by Russians and in Russian, the Muslims, whom censuses show to be the worst Russian speakers in the USSR, will be at a disadvantage in their own homelands — something they are bound to resent. In theory they could search for jobs in European or Siberian towns where there are labour shortages. But this seems unlikely, unless they are somehow pushed. Soviet wages and Russian winters and cities have exerted little attraction for them in the past. And their poor Russian and industrial skill do not favour it. If they do go they would presumably, like similar groups in Western Europe, have to take the worst jobs and cluster in protective ghettos, to the dismay of Slav neighbours. If they do not, unemployment in Central Asia will be that much worse, and the labour crisis in the north that much more acute.

Either way, these manpower pressures will generate turbulence beneath the superficial calm of Soviet interethnic relations. Travellers in the area, both Russians and outsiders, already report considerable, though subdued, tensions. There is

very little intermingling between Muslims and Slavs in Central Asia (unlike, say, in the Muslim Tartar regions on the Volga). Inter-marriage is rare, and usually between Muslim men and Slav women, with the children adopting the Muslim nationality. The Russians have been less obsessively racist in the past towards their subject peoples than have the Anglo-Saxons or the Dutch. But it is in many ways the generous aspect of Soviet policies (relative tolerance for local languages, urban and industrial development, stress on schooling) that may be their undoing.

A COMBINATION of improved education and population growth will produce a young student/intelligentsia explosion, and perhaps a young unemployed/intelligentsia explosion (witness Teheran). Muslim peoples in Central Asia do not have the degree of economic, linguistic and political prominence in their own republics that, say, the Georgians or the Armenians have in their republics. As their numbers swell, they are bound to demand at least that much.

Until a decade or two ago, many of the cities in Central Asia were almost as Russian as Vologda or Novgorod. In the next decade or two, most will dramatically change character. To the 10-12 million Slavs in the area, the 600 odd million

**Aren't you glad that the nicest things
in life never lose their freshness?**



Muslims will become very visible indeed. The Slavs may decide to emigrate. There are some signs, in fact that they have already begun to do so. But presumably, enough of them will remain to create the conditions for potential conflict. The time will almost certainly come when power will have to be transferred — at least partially — from one group to another. (In Yugoslavia in recent years, the Orthodox and Slavic Serbs have withdrawn both demographically and in other ways, from the province of Kosovo, which is dominated increasingly by the highly fertile and mainly Muslim Albanians. This has occurred amid considerable bitterness, but the central leadership has found it necessary to tolerate the transformation. The two cases are not exactly parallel. But Kosovo is nonetheless suggestive.)

If on the other hand, the Muslims emigrate in large numbers, matters will only be complicated further. Five million Central Asians in European and Siberian USSR by the 1990s might ease unemployment in their homelands, but would not materially diminish their numerical predominance there. If those emigrants stirred the response among Slavs that Algerians have done among the French, or Turks among the Germans, a very delicate problem could arise. It would be one without adventures. Elsewhere, Europeans had withdrawn from their colonies before the 'coloured' colonials began to emigrate to the metropolitan countries in large numbers. But if ethnic relations turned sour in European Russia and Soviet Central Asia the Soviet leadership could be confronted by a Wolverhampton and a Salisbury simultaneously, within the same political boundaries.

The external environment is unlikely to be propitious. The Anglo-American powers have proved their superior skills in losing influence slowly, spectacularly and in an attention-monopolising way, but by the 1990s the Soviet post colonial paradox may be no less conspicuous. Chinese hostility is already an inhibiting factor in Soviet Central Asia and Sinkiang, where both sides compete for the favours of the indigenous peoples. The spread of Muslim fundamentalism and ethnic sentiment in the south will impose increasing constraints, despite the consolation that it also embarrasses and alarms the US.

The USSR's own military forces may cease to be an entirely reliable instrument for handling the problem. By 1990, about a quarter of all recruits will be from the Muslim peoples, and this proportion will continue to grow. In fact in the 1980s the Soviet army will be experiencing exactly the same kind of manpower crunch as the rest of the economy. If greater numbers of Slavs are drawn off into other sectors, the linguistic and technical skills available to the Soviet army will be severely diminished. Morale may suffer, and it may appear to some that a radical ethnic

restructuring of the heavily Slav upper echelons of the Soviet army officer corps should be conducted.

These are some of the problems that have probably been worrying some of the more far-sighted middle-rank Soviet politicians. What possible solutions might they be looking for?

Many Soviet demographic observers have for some years now been urging their government quite explicitly to adopt a differential population policy aimed at strengthening Slav birthrates and damping down those of the Muslims. Some East European countries have succeeded by various means in increasing their birthrates. But the effects, though not negligible, are modest in relation to the 'need' in the Soviet case. Besides, the problem is already maturing: the time to act was 20 years ago, if not earlier. And in any case, the authorities seem wary of such measures.

The present Soviet leadership seems keener on trying to assimilate the national minorities and spreading Russian as the second (or even adopted first) language among them. Census results suggest some successes in this field, but mainly with Slav and other European peoples. The proportion of Russian speakers in the total USSR population is actually declining, though slower than the proportion of those identifying as ethnic Russians. Paradoxically, if the Russian language were to spread, it could help facilitate the growth of 'liberationist' sentiments among Muslim peoples. The Russians may point to their 'liberal' record and try to enhance it by some modest or symbolic popular measures. But when people see themselves in a colonial position, honour may not be easily satisfied. If assimilation and proclamation of brotherhood do not do the trick, some kind of strategy for separate but equal development might be attempted in the future. There is already a considerable element of informal apartheid, but there are few signs at present that it could develop into a positive policy.

A further possibility would be to grant greater autonomy to the Central Asian republics in running their domestic affairs. This is a more serious version of the cosmetic liberal approach. Soviet governments have had little stomach for such measures since the 1920s. The strongly centralist communist tradition is against them, and they would set an extremely hazardous precedent.

Finally there is the even more drastic strategy of total (political) withdrawal, leaving Slav-leavened elites to run people's republics along Czech-Mongolian lines. Such a belt of states could form a glittering model for development and at the same time a kind of *cordon sanitaire* between European Russia and possible future antagonists such as a hierocratic Iran or a Pro-Chinese people's republic of Pakistan. However, this strategy is

unlikely to be chosen deliberately. Recent events would suggest rather, that an attempt will be made to create the *cordon sanitaire* outside the present Soviet borders. The most probable solution is that brotherhood and unity will be ceaselessly proclaimed, the unfraternal elements periodically repressed and surreptitiously turned against one another, while migration and the economy are manipulated in various piecemeal ways. In other words, the leadership will hang on, doing what it has been, hoping for the best.

If ethnic passions and conflicts were to break out in earnest (whipped on perhaps by stirring calls from bearded figures over the fence) one can readily imagine certain consequences — especially if it coincided with intensified jostling on the Sino-Soviet border. It is possible, for example, that the Soviet grip on Eastern Europe will be loosened. The good offices of the US State Department notwithstanding, this can never, under present arrangements, be a stable sphere of influence for the Soviet Union. The Polish Pope's recent conciliatory appeals to Islam in Turkey are of particular interest in this context.

Another possibility is that Soviet Russians may feel a rush of sympathy for their Western adversaries on both sides of the Atlantic, and even — depending on the circumstances — vice versa. Russian politicians might begin (as the Russian intelligentsia has been doing increasingly in recent years) to 'rediscover' their own past as a European nation and culture, to regret their 'renegade' role in stirring Asians and others against honest white men, and seek to come in from the cold. At most equally likely, however, is that the chauvinism just below the surface of Russian life might surge to dominance in the state, directing reckless strikes against ethnic enemies of all hues, within and perhaps also without.

The real danger seems to be that 140 million courageous, talented, dugged, brutal, uncharitable, economically muddled, culturally decapitated, but patriotic, determined and highly armed Russians have overreached themselves. Militarily they are powerful but demographically and in most other ways they are not strong enough to defend the far-flung empire they have created. Central to any rational Western response must be an awareness of the fragility beneath the external and domestic policies of the Soviet Union. Western policy should be built on the probability that centrifugal forces within the USSR will increase, just as they have within the world communist movement and the erstwhile Sino-Soviet bloc. The Russians will need to be helped over their post-colonial menopause. For if we fail to understand what is happening, or fail to respond appropriately, the shock waves will be felt far and wide, and they may be unpredictably violent.

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One hour to curfew

DAVID SELBOURNE in Kabul talks to a major in the Afghan army.

THE Major, a round-faced and stow-speaking man in his late 30s, prematurely grey, was wearing a civilian grey-brown felt cap. He broke off, while we were talking and had a hurried conversation with a youth who had come into the room. He excused himself, and went out with him. I was left alone. It was cold and the light from the single bulb was dim and yellowing. On the table was a book, entitled *The Afghan and British Second War, 1878-1880*, published by the Afghan Academy of Sciences, Kabul 1979. The charcoal

stove had slowly burned low, and the windows were damp with condensation. Outside, the snow-capped mountains were gleaming under a glacial moon. It was one hour to curfew.

He returned after ten minutes, incredulous but laughing. "Did you see what happened?" he asked. "I was told to go to my room, and lock myself in. This boy you just saw said to me, 'Someone is coming to arrest you'. I had to go on foot to find out, because there are no telephones working. I said"—and he enacts it with expansive gestures—"If you want, come and take me. But it is only a

rumour. Kabul is full of rumours and people causing uneasiness. They know I am a government man, so I can still get shot in the street also". After a pause, he added: "These people are still here, even in the centre of the city".

He became a socialist, he said, one day when he was 18. A single experience had been decisive. The King had come to the district where the Major's father was Governor, or Prefect. There were 600 invited guests, the rich of the province, plied with 'chicken, rice, everything'. The poor were offered merely a piece of bread

Afghan students in Teheran demonstrating against the Russian intervention in Afghanistan



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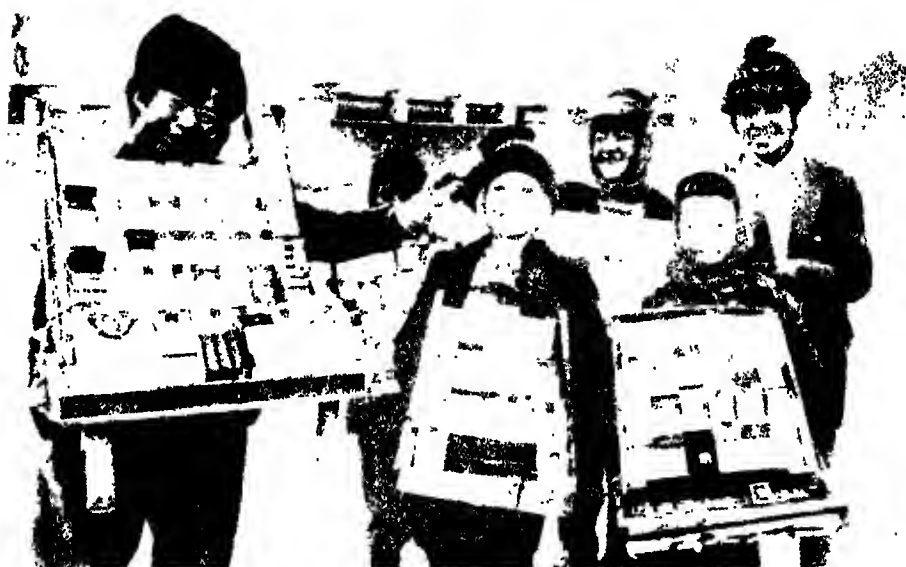
while the king 'only squeezed the rice a little with his fingers, and did not eat.' But the poor could see what the rich were being given. 'These things the poor people wanted also. They too were human. This was my lesson', he said; he knew that 'from that day' he must 'fight for the poor people, and for my country'.

Outside the dark window framing the bare branches of a blackened and wintry tree, there was the sound of female voices shouting, and a car-door slamming. The voices rose, raucous. He got up, and parted the half-drawn curtains, wiping the window with the back of his sleeve and peering out into the darkness. 'What is happening?', I asked. 'They are', he said, 'what do you call them?...prostitutes.' You could see a few shadowy figures in the icy roadway, and a car's sidelights. A woman was yelling, insults in any language, as the car drove off. 'Later we will deal with this problem. We have no time at the moment. Either put them in one place, with medical treatment; or train them to some work, nursing for example. We have not yet decided'. He drew the curtains closed.

After the April 1978 Tarakki takeover from President Daoud, he says that the couriers for Afghan drugs, (in a world of their own which evidently did not include newspapers), had for a while kept on coming, for their pick-ups and assignments. And in the newly expropriated Kabul hotels and restaurants, from which the drug trade had been organized by 'big crooks with houses in Europe', the Afghan revolution had, unknown to the drug runners, placed its own secret policemen. In some cases they had successfully intercepted the couriers, their names and identities are known to the new rulers. 'Now', he said, 'all these hopeless, useless fellows cannot come here any longer; and the big Afghan interests are sitting in Pakistan, with their money and their servants. We don't want them', he added fiercely. 'They can sit there for ever'.

Known, too, is the identity of the major German pharmaceutical company which had had a factory in Kabul before the revolution, and had run an illicit trade in drugs of another kind. 'They made huge sums from it', said the Major. Their method was to have cartons of real pharmaceuticals sent from Frankfurt, and passed through the customs in Kabul. Within an hour or two, they would carefully empty the bottles and refill them with opium, heroin and morphine. They would tell the customs that they had received a wrong consignment, returning the cartons with their original customs marks on them, often by the same flight back to Europe.

Kabul has also changed again since the recently-passed days of the overthrown Hazizullah Amin, who is now called the 'hangman of the revolution'. It is not just that the *Kabul Times* has suddenly become the *Kabul New Times*; or that the few months-old airport slogan, welcoming travellers to the 'Land of the New Model Revolu-



Children from Kabul hawking American cigarettes

tion', in white plaster on a red ground, is being laboriously chipped away with chisels. For Afghanistan too had its own Robespierre, who had begun vociferously to consume the revolution's own leaders, as Stalin did with the Bolsheviks in October. Moreover, Amin had put his own brother in to head the army, and the secret police was being run by his nephew. They were all executed, together. In return, Kabul has new estates of workers' houses, set in the dusty landscape outside the grey city, under the towering mountains of the Hindu Kush, craggy and gigantic.

The Afghan Major has become hardened to death. He had spent ten months in jail, tortured by Daoud's men in 1977, his finger nails removed, and salt put into the cuts made on his body. 'I became as thin', he said casually, 'as a wooden person'. His fingers are still swollen. 'For a long time', he says, 'we knew the revolution was coming'. He had been engaged in rural political work in Herat Province for several years before the April 1978 overthrow of Daoud, using an American-financed programme for co-operative farming as a base, and cover. His swollen fingers rested on the table-edge, while he laughed at the memory of U.S. funds being diverted towards the revolution.

The Major's father, a Muslim and a former feudal landowner, has now fled Kabul to 'the north of the country', where 'he has brought some sheep, taken a second wife, and will raise his sheep and his new children'. He refuses to return to Kabul, despite his son's persuading; the expropriation of the landlords is already far advanced, and advancing. He had had to help his son pay the ransom for his life, of 400,000 Afghani (£30,000), which had been given to a 'high official'. I asked what had happened to the 'high official'. 'He has been killed', he said without batting an eyelid.

The Major had known Amin well. He had been a school-teacher, and had taught the Major algebra in

different days. But he was always a 'troublemaker', who had 'set people against each other, and thought only of himself', he said, looking at his fingers. Outside, it was dead silent, not a vehicle passing. 'Amin', he said, 'tried to interfere with people's beliefs also. That you cannot do', said the Major, 'when they have had such beliefs for generations. We must allow people', he said, his English breaking down; 'we cannot control everything'. You can now see the devout praying to Mecca, their shoes neatly placed beside them, foreheads to the marbled ground at the airport; the Russian tanks bumping and creaking through the dry scrub, on the far side of the runway.

'Everyone has been let out of jail', he says, emphatically. 'Not one person remains'. There is a silence. What is going to happen in Afghanistan. I ask him, 'Imperialism cannot win in this country', he declares. 'In any case, the imperialists only think of profit', he says bitterly. 'but we must defend our revolution'. And the Russians? 'If they leave, everything will be finished in half-an-hour'. There are 40,000 on the other side, 'including commandos', trained in Pakistan and armed by America and the Chinese. 'The Russians will be here for one year', he said, answering the question before it was asked him; 'no longer than necessary', he added. 'But when the Afghanistan door is open', he said brightening, 'then everything is open'. There was a pause. 'Iran will also one day come to revolution and, if the people are strong, Pakistan and India also'.

It was the hour of curfew; the hour of a silence as dead as stone. There were long stalactites hanging from the eaves of the house opposite; and red flags blowing stiffly in the frozen air, from red flag-posts, as the plane taxied along the runway for takeoff. The Major was jovial, his eyes twinkling in the cold room, lighting a cigarette in his swollen fingers.

The double edged sword of Islamic revivalism

By CHANDAN SOURAV MITRA

A CERTAIN MYTHOLOGY has been built up of late around the so-called militant revival of Islam. All too often however, it has been construed as a socially independent and an almost autonomous phenomenon. The last two years have been violent years for the Islamic World; but the external symptoms have unfortunately been interpreted as the real substance. As the curtain draws on the first act of the sordid Afghan drama, the world appears all the more confused as regards the real meaning of the 'revival'. Iran and Afghanistan have grabbed most of the headlines, but the recent attack on the Grand Mosque at Ka'aba, is in fact most symbolic of this phenomenon of 'revival'. In the analysis of the events taking place in Iran, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan, the deepest level of causation, namely the disruption of the feudal-patriarchal social order has not been sufficiently understood.

Mohammed ibn Abdulla al-Katani, the 26 year old tribal leader who led the attack on Ka'aba, in fact symbolises popular response to the breakdown of the long-standing feudal-patriarchal social relations, and the advance of capitalism. It must be grasped that al-Katani and his desperadoes fall in a specific historical category. In all times of profound socio-economic change, latent social tensions necessarily come to the surface, producing millenarian move-

ments with a messianic leadership.

The English Civil War of the 1640's may have produced one Oliver Cromwell, but it had also produced scores of small-time messiahs, who promised liberation from the everyday drudgery and misery of the capitalist system which was then being established in England. Cults like those of the Levellers, True Levellers, Diggers, Ranters, and the Fifth Monarchists all proclaimed the end of the millenium of exploitation and preached ideas of primitive socialism. They attacked established religion on grounds of corruption, but were all devoutly religious in their own way. Their main target of attack was the clergy. It was said that men did not wish to confess adultery to the priests, for the priests were known to run after such women the very next day. Yet the Fifth Monarchists preached the imminent resurrection of Jesus Christ to deliver the faithful. The similarity with Ka'aba should not be missed. The attackers of the Mosque declared the existing clergy to be corrupt, and proclaimed al-Katani to be the Mahdi—the awaited one.

These conflicting tendencies—to decry existing religious orders and to place faith in a revived and purified religion—are indeed the signs of an old world unable to die, and a new world unable to be born. Not only England, but the colonial world has responded in a similar manner to the advance of capitalist relations,

through violent anti-imperialist, militant, revivalist movements. The Mahdist uprising in Sudan, the Taiping Movement in China, and to a great extent, 1857 in India, were all symbolic of the same process. In most such popular outbursts the leadership was in the hands of leaders with a mesmanic appeal and a nostalgic ideology.

These uprisings almost inevitably took place at the point when capitalist-imperialist relations were sought to be super-imposed on a feudal-patriarchal social base. Oil has transformed the economies of the Arab countries in much the same way as railways had done to India or China. But as was inevitable, oil may have brought billions of dollars to Arabia, but its benefits have been unevenly diffused over Arab society. The oil-producing Sheikhs, significantly, are no longer tribal chieftains, but capitalists, searching for wage-labour in a pre-capitalist social formation. This has inevitably created tensions in Saudi society.

As a means of diffusing this very social tension the ruling oligarchies of these countries have increasingly resorted to the use of religion. As the traditional patriarchal society breaks down, religion becomes almost the last unifying factor between the privileged and the non-privileged in these unequal societies. Thus the outward show of Islamic puritanism must be intensified. Saudi Arabia must insist on not employing air-

The US ambassador (extreme right) Donald McHenry addresses the UN Security Council meeting on Afghanistan. At left is the Russian ambassador Oleg Troyanovsky. The British ambassador Sir Anthony Parsons is seen taking notes





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hostesses, and even stone to death an adulterous princess. In a grotesque imitation, Zia-ul-Haq must lash people for consumption of alcohol. Pakistan's is the most morbid case of attempting to sever all historical legacies, so that the ruling classes can feel secure by whipping up a religious frenzy. In fact, threatened with rebellion, ex-President Daoud of Afghanistan had tried similar tactics, in a bid to thwart Tarakku.

But religion is always a double-edged sword as the Ka'aba has proved in such a disquieting manner to the Saudi rulers. Having unleashed a religious tirade the ruling oligarchies have to face the logic of it. Religion always has two meanings. The rulers wish to use it as an instrument to diffuse social tension. The masses have often interpreted it as their only means of deliverance. If the Ka'aba raiders protested against the increasing corrosion of Islamic values under the impact of the West, the limousine-riding Sheikhs have no ready answer to this justified grievance. Of course, after Iran the Arab Sheikhs are a wiser lot. No Sheikh will again experiment with a ruthless super-imposition of capitalist values on a feudal-patriarchal social base. It is not modernisation, as is commonly supposed, that caused the Iranian backlash. It was the dislocation of the traditional economy, the unequal, lop-sided growth pattern, rising unemployment, which brought the economy to a brink. In

spite of apparent prosperity. After all figures alone do not reflect the health of the economy—the human factor is as important.

The point simply is that the transition from a pre-capitalist society to a capitalist one invariably involves great social upheaval. Any effort at modernisation, dislocates some of the peripherally privileged classes of traditional society—like the tribal chieftains—who now become the focal points of popular dissent. In all backward economies, where religion plays a vital social function, both the ruling classes as well as the dissenters attempt to use religion to propagate their cause. The latter are naturally better equipped to do so, since there is an element of hypocrisy involved in the former's use of religion. But, taken together, the recurrent use of religion by the conflicting parties, gives religion a new significance in these societies. The revival of religion therefore is not an isolated and autonomous phenomenon, but a natural historical process.

This religious mythology often comes to be symbolised in one person—giving rise to a messianic movement. For instance, the tribal movements in India (starting with Birsu Munda's Santhal rebellion in Chotanagpur in 1902, to Alluri Sitharama Raju's Rampa rebellion in Andhra in the 1920's) reflect, in embryonic form, this very phenomenon. These tribes resented the intrusion of outsiders, who came to grab their land, timber,

minerals and their women. They deeply resented the destruction of their age-old patriarchal system, which the outsiders now sought to replace with crude cash relationships. It is not that pre-capitalist exploitation was very acceptable—often it was far worse than capitalist exploitation—but it had a certain acceptability because it had been tempered by time. So time and again the tribals rose under the leadership of messiahs, who were reputed to have the power to turn 'bullets into water'. Their protest was wiped out in blood when the bullets refused to get diluted.

The proclamation of al-Katani as the 'Mahdi' and the assumption of demi-God status by Ayatollah Khomeini has to be viewed from this standpoint. Transitional society responds to the breakdown of patriarchalism in a similar manner almost everywhere. Thus, Islam's militant 'revival' is not a sudden catharsis that has seized the region. It will spread and intensify as oil gets costlier, and the Sheikhs get richer. Khomeini and al-Katani are symbols of traditional societies' resistance to capitalism. In that sense they are almost a historical necessity, just as the Fifth Monarchists were to 17th century England. The disquieting fact, however, is that Afghanistan which boldly attempted to skip the stage of the painful introduction of capitalism altogether, is not doing much better than the others. ■

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Third time unlucky

UNIDO-III ends in a fiasco

THERE were no miracles at UNIDO-III, although a few would have been more than welcome. Altogether 2,000 delegates from 120 countries congregated in New Delhi to participate in the first major international gathering of the new decade, but it was not long before the battle lines were clearly demarcated between the rich and poor countries.

The basic task before the conference was to review the progress of industrialisation in the developing world since the Lima Declaration of 1975, which set the Third World countries a target of a 25 per cent share in the world's industrial output by the year 2000. The conference was also to consider various suggestions made by UNIDO in order to achieve this target within a time frame since, judging by present trends, the Third World countries will be able to provide only 13 per cent of the total global industrial output, by the time the deadline approaches. The first of these suggestions was the creation of an international financial agency to promote financial co-operation between the oil-producing countries and the other Third World countries. The second was the setting up of a global fund for the stimulation of industry.

UNIDO-III held a certain significance for the UN General Assembly as well, which will soon have to adopt a new international development strategy for the Eighties at its forthcoming special session, which will be followed by the launching of a round of global negotiations on international economic co-operation. It was in this context of a new understanding that the United Nations Secretary-General, Dr Kurt Waldheim, charted the major objective of the conference as being the achieving of progress towards a new international economic order.

It was never smooth sailing. To start with, a member of the European Commission stated very clearly that the demands being made by the developing countries were impossible, to say the least. Sweden felt that specifics could not be discussed with the special session of the UN General Assembly around the corner, while the Socialist bloc chose to highlight the need to decelerate the arms race in order to shore up development efforts. Despite all this pressure, however, the 'Group of 77' did well to put the North in a tricky position by calling for sectoral, dis-



aggregated targets for achieving the Lima goals. In the face of such confrontation, one 'Group of 77' representative called it a "dialogue with the deaf."

The first deadlock came when the developed countries took a firm stand on the New Delhi Declaration, which, according to them, was a political document framed by the 'Group of 77' at its Havana Ministerial meeting. The 'Group of 77' had two documents—the New Delhi Declaration and the Plan of Action—which they wanted to use as the basis for negotiations. The developed countries had no objection to negotiating on the basis of the Plan of Action but objected to the Declaration saying "How can we allow a document approved at another forum to be imposed upon us?" Developing countries, however, were averse to dealing with only one of the documents, so UNIDO-III reached its first impasse soon after talks began.

As if that was not enough, there soon came another complication. The developed countries then adopted a dog-in-the-manger attitude on the sharing of nuclear technology. Dele-

gates said that they had no instructions from the respective Governments on the subject and conveniently by-passed the issue by saying that they would discuss it later but not at that stage. The stand of the Socialist bloc was even more surprising. Reverting from their normal stance of taking the side of the 'Group of 77', the socialist countries called for the deletion of the proposal calling upon the developed countries to "rectify their export policies by removing arbitrary restrictions on the transfer of nuclear technology needed by developing countries for their industrialisation".

With zero hour approaching, there was still no appreciable progress being made despite the best efforts on the part of India, the host country, to bring about a settlement. There were also last minute attempts made by the heads of three major bodies—the 'Group of 77', advanced Western nations and the Socialist bloc—to arrive at some sort of consensus. They worked on draft after draft of the working paper in an attempt to bridge the chasm that still divided the rich and poor nations on all the crucial issues.

Ultimately, with no other alternative, the conference was extended by a day in order to ratify the document which was to form the New Delhi Declaration and Plan of Action. Mr Ahmed Ghazal, chairman of the 'Group of 77', proposed that the document be adopted as the declaration of the conference and his proposal, which was put to vote, was carried by 83 countries for while 22 voted against. Thus ended UNIDO-III after having recorded no appreciable headway at all with the developing nations in exactly the same position they were in five years ago. The targets set so optimistically at the Lima conference are still as far away and as remote as they were then. The stand taken by the Western nations on these targets is astonishing to say the least; they feel that the targets should only be viewed as "projections". Whether they are targets or projections is immaterial; what really matters is that they did nothing to bring the targets/projections within reach of the developing countries.

The fact that the New Delhi declaration was passed by a massive majority means little since the industrialised nations, as a whole, voted against it. With the decision went all hopes of snaring industrial know-how. At the end of UNIDO-III the Third World countries were left with precious little apart from a sense of unity among themselves. As if that was not enough, the third decade of industrialisation—the Eighties—has turned out to be a non-starter.

The crux of the stalemate lay not in the issues involved but in the attitude. Had there not been a massive global fund proposal of 300 billion

Courtesy: Indian Express

dollars, but of a lesser amount, the attitude of the industrialised world would not have been so rigid. As someone put it, "though the match ended one day later than scheduled, by the time the final whistle blew, both sides were locked in a goalless draw". UNIDO—III was one long confrontation from start to finish. It was an expensive confrontation, too. It cost India as much as 2.5 million dollars in preparation alone, in addition to Rs 61,000 per day for 22 days. This does not include the expenses incurred by the UN body.

If the "wait-and-watch" attitude of the socialist countries was surprising during the Conference, then the stand taken by the 'Group B' countries was even more so. They refused to discuss matters of transfer of technology, considering this a weapon

for bargaining equal to the weapon of oil on the side of the OPEC nations. Another surprising thing was that not one nation raised any objections about the oil price hike which is disturbing the economic order of the world as a whole.

Despite all these apparent setbacks, the Executive Director of UNIDO, Mr Abdel-Rehan Khane expressed satisfaction over the "success" of the Conference in focussing the attention on the "legitimate and urgent demands" of the Third World. An American delegate commented: "Developing countries are happy with all this eyewash, and we are really happy to be in New Delhi and enjoy such wonderful hospitality."

K. L. NANDAN, New Delhi

Books are becoming expensive friends

As publishers turn pirates



A. L. Dias at a book exhibition

AS New Delhi hosts the fourth International Book Fair, an exercise that aims, among other things, to spread the reading habit, thousands of students and booklovers are desperately searching for the books they need. What with shooting prices and sudden scarcities of coveted titles, the common reader today is starved of just the kind of literature he wants — whether it be a book that could see him through an examination, or a novel for relaxation. The result is an unwholesome dependence on a few city libraries and a racket in illegal reprints, called "piracy" in publishing jargon.

The recent rise in the prices of Indian and foreign books is the steepest so far. A bookseller in Old Delhi complains of persistent requests from his student-customers

for older editions of textbooks, because those brought out later are cruelly expensive. "What am I to do? I've run out of second-hands and they just won't buy the new ones," he says, grabbing some books a boy has brought to sell. Many of the glossy covers lining his racks were unsold stock, which had been lying there for years.

The main reason for the price-rise is, of course, the shortage and increased cost of publishers' raw materials — paper, printing and binding materials. Publishers claim that the increased cost of production has not been matched by corresponding adjustments in royalties which they have to pay to authors and commissions to booksellers. An author's royalty is roughly 15 per cent. The commission to distributors is a little more. "In fact, we are quite happy

if we can get even ten per cent ourselves," said a smiling publisher who dismissed the suggestion that publishers always profit the most. Even with that, most Indian publishers have been ignoring overheads, he claimed.

The shortage and rise in the price of paper, which resulted in the raising of prices of newspapers recently, is the immediate factor behind abnormally high book prices. The Delhi State Booksellers and Publishers Association made a representation to the one-time Industries Minister, Mr George Fernandes, apprising him of their difficulty in selling books. The Government, which controls about 20 per cent of the total paper supply, failed to check paper prices, which rose from Rs 1,800 per ton in 1966 to Rs 5,000 per ton in 1974-75 — the sharpest rise — and later Rs 8,000 per ton in 1979-80. These were prices the Government charged for the paper it supplied, which is treated as a base price by private millowners, who charged even more. Book prices, as a result, increased fourfold. The increase in paper prices was recently aggravated by the mid-term election, which consumed an unprecedented amount of the material for its extra-large ballot papers. Even before the election, there was large-scale hoarding of paper by parties and politicians who needed posters for their election campaigns. Millions of rupees were paid in advance to millowners to ensure a supply of paper for election purposes.

Shortages and high prices had an adverse effect on the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the Government organ responsible for getting Higher Secondary level text books printed and supplied. NCERT was unable to buy prescribed text books for study upto class 12. The situation was so bad that some prescribed books did not even see the light of day until about a fortnight before the examination. One example was *Lands and People*, a book for class seven, which made its appearance in September 1979 although it was due in July 1979. Again, students of classes 11 and 12 received their physics and chemistry text books in October last year. Their examinations are due in March this year. When NCERT found it could not cope with the job it had taken it sought the help of private publishers. Another major reason for the rise in prices of foreign books is due to the periodic revision of the foreign exchange rate by the Reserve Bank of India and the value of the rupee has thus fallen in relation to other currencies.

Chiefly responsible for the scarcity of books is NCERT's slow-paced administrative machinery has often failed to meet school deadlines for the supply of text books, even while having much of the work done by private publishers. The rest of the blame must rest on unscrupulous distributors who hoard copies of a book which is in great demand. One bookseller even suspected illicit

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deals between publishers and scholars who recommend books for college and university syllabi: "It might just be possible that people are paid to recommend books. You see, there are no scruples in this business. After all those who recommend are humans too," he said. It was fantastic, he added, how certain titles, when distributors got wind that they had been recommended, suddenly began disappearing from the market. Examples were Graham Greene's *The Quiet American*, Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, two books included in Delhi University's college syllabus and Love and Bailey's *Practice of Surgery*, a medical text book almost unobtainable.

The result, apart from countless students having to suffer, is a racket in illegal reprinting of scarce volumes. Book-piracy, as it is called, is a common practice in many States, particularly Bihar. Popular foreign titles are printed on offset, and almost exact replicas of them are produced and priced conveniently. Until recently, the racket was limited to foreign books, but now there are even school and college text books which are reprinted illegally. "Don't be surprised if walking down Nai Sarak here, you happen to find a rare Penguin or textbook lying aborning," a bookseller told me.

Although many publishers have a different story to tell, and would rather speak about their problems — no doubt serious — of production costs and marketability it is a fact that books in this country are not reaching those who need them most. The only hope lies in the possibility of expanding the operations and capacity of bodies like the National Book Trust (NBT), which is coordinating the International Book Fair and has held numerous fairs in India

and abroad. The NBT, set up "to foster bookmindedness" and make available various titles in different languages at cheaper prices, is actively helping Indian publishers by holding fairs, which create a world market for the books and attract prospective translators. The fair will also open avenues for exports and imports. As a result of NBT's efforts, Indian publishers have made a sizable dent in the world book market, and at least in Africa, broken the domination of US and British publishers. India today ranks third among English book publishing nations, and seventh among all publishing nations.

NBT also caters to university and college students. It also has an unique subsidy scheme, in the sense that it is a joint venture between publishers at the private and public level. The scheme involves subsidised printing of books the organisation finds suitable by private publishers. NBT sends the manuscripts for reviews, and if recommended, asks a publisher to print a certain number of copies at a subsidy. The price fixed is usually one-and-a-half to two times the cost of production. For this it spends anything between 15 and 20 lakh rupees a year. All major private publishers are said to have cooperated fully so far. NBT's thoughtful chairman, Mr A. L. Dias the ex-Governor of West Bengal remarked: "Books are a big gamble. The risks and hazards of the publishing trade, and high prices frustrate bookmindedness, which is our aim. We plan, therefore, to expand our work, to encourage books in rural areas and sustain the literary campaign".

NIRMAL MITRA, New Delhi

Moonlight murders

What kind of feud was this?

IT was nearing midnight at Bijova on the Uda-pur-Rani road in Pal district, Rajasthan. In the cold breezy night of January 2, 1980 everything appeared normal. Farmers Namaram, Sujaram and Kenaram were busy watering their fields on the fatful full moon night when suddenly the silence was broken by a blood curdling shriek.

Namaram and Sujaram hearing the pathetic and continuous cry for help called Kenaram from a nearby field where he was working and rushed to the source of the cry only to discover that the sound had emerged from Kenaram's house. The three rushed in and found all but one of the Kenaram family lying in a pool of blood. They had been mercilessly butchered earlier in the evening by some unknown assailants.

Enquiries reveal that the gruesome event was the culmination of a prolonged feud between two families

of the Sirvi caste. Kenaram was not on good terms with another Sirvi and had been subjected to constant harassment for a long time. Kenaram's approach to his well was blocked when a house had been constructed unauthorisedly by the other. When Kenaram objected a litigation occurred. Later on, Kenaram's opponent made an abortive attempt to construct a small canal through the fields of Ghasiram, Kenaram's cousin.

In December 1978 some miscreants armed with guns, lathis and sharp-edged "kunts" attacked Kenaram but he was able to defend himself valiantly with the help of his cousins and neighbours. The attackers retreated only after one of their guns had been snatched away from them.

Sometime in the past month a large number of Sirvis had assembled at Bijova at the annual fair in honour of their ruling deity. The dispute between Kenaram and others

cement and told him that he must choose between cricket and the company. Divecha then took up golf and achieved a good standard in this sport, reaching the All-India quarter-finals twice. He did play one more season of cricket, in 1962 for Saurashtra, when the local manager was more sympathetic to cricket. Rajindernath's Test career was also cut short at about the same age. When he came to Burmah-Shell he was a qualified engineer and was recruited into the officer cadre like Divecha, and did not pursue cricket much thereafter. The sporting career of Punjabi was less affected because he was employed in the supervisory cadre, a level below the officer cadre, where the company could still afford to carry cricketers to some extent. Clerks and supervisors could get time off to play sport even after 1950. With the reduced activities of Burmah-Shell after 1965, Divecha left the firm for Mahindra and Mahindra, Rajindernath for Indo-Nippon Batteries in Baroda and Punjabi retired in the normal manner.

Mahindra and Mahindra, a Bombay engineering firm founded in 1947, has been more consistent in its patronage of cricket which began in the 1950s and continues today. The company policy was similar, in many respects, to Tata's but on a much smaller scale, befitting a middle-size firm with 7,000 employees and another 4 to 5,000 in allied concerns. The company, like Tata's could count on a sympathetic management for "Mr Mahinura" has been "consistently interested in sports." Then, too, there was the support for all manner of games including popular spectator sports, such as cricket, together with minor sports, such as golf and traditional Indian games. The company has also institutionalised its sporting policy, in the interests of evenhandedness and a balanced programme, so that if two cricketers are taken on "we must take on two hockey players, two soccer players" and so forth "on the same salary". A unique element of Mahindra patronage was that winning tournaments, and boosting the company through resulting publicity, has been of very marginal interest. In fact the company has built up a losing tradition in cricket for, as one long-time employee put it, "we are always the losers in the Times Shield. It was no accident that this company has yet to win this competition. It should be noted, in fairness to this company, that to maintain even a losing team in the A Division requires a considerable investment.

CRICKET PATRONAGE had expanded considerably in the 1950s but it was to expand even more in the 1960s with the entrance of the State Bank of India which recruited players on a scale hitherto unknown. The Bank's rise to eminence was spectacular because in the short space of eight years, 1962-70, it recruited not only some



Syed Kirmani, rated as the best wicket keeper in the world, is employed by the State Bank of India

of the leading players of Bombay, including Baloo Gupte, Ajit Wadekar, Eknath Solkar and Ramnath Parkar but also players from almost every major centre of India including S. Guha and Ambar Roy from Calcutta; Vijay Mehra and Bishen Singh Bedi from Delhi; G. R. Vishwanath, S. Kirmani and B. Kunderan from Karnataka; P. Krishnamurthy and Abid Ali from Hyderabad; Milkha Singh and V. V. Kumar from Madras; Hanuman Singh from Rajasthan and others. The Bank differed from all previous commercial patrons in that it employed cricketers in some 5,000 branches around the country and did not centralise players at the Bombay headquarters. The majority of the Bank's cricketers, as a result, were not listed on the Bombay muster and hence not eligible to play in the State Bank's Times Shield team. Consequently, the Bank has not had as much impact on the Bombay competition as other companies and has won the shield only four times: in 1964, 1966-68. However, the real indicator of the cricket strength of the State Bank was manifest in 1967 when no less than thirteen of the seventeen who represented India in England were employed by the State Bank. It was quite common for State Bank employees to constitute a majority of the Indian XI in the late 1960s. Even in 1971 the Bank could boast of seven of the Indian XI.

The State Bank had employed a few cricketers prior to 1962. Con-

tractor joined the bank in 1959, because of the interest of the Chairman, but left after only nine months because he believed that it would be difficult to both play cricket and to pass the banking exams which were necessary for his career to blossom as a banker. Ramnath Kenny joined the Bank in August 1959 but left in April 1960 when the Bank was unwilling to grant him leave to play Lancashire League cricket owing to a misunderstanding over the contract. It was the Bank policy then that a provisional officer like Kenny, who was on a probationary status, could not secure leave of this nature.

The greatest contribution of the State Bank to cricket was its encouragement of local cricket which provided a stimulus towards the decentralisation of the game. By employing Bedi in Delhi, Vishwanath and Kirmani in Bangalore, Ambar Roy in Calcutta, Milkha Singh in Madras and so forth, the State Bank has helped to develop cricket outside Bombay. It has also been responsible, to some extent, for the improvement of teams such as Delhi and Karnataka which have been able to challenge the Bombay monopoly of the Ranji Trophy in recent years. Bombay companies have also been sensitive to this problem of cricket centralisation and have encouraged their non-Bombay players to turn out for their respective home states. But because most of the cricket employees of the large commercial patrons actually work in Bombay, their visits to home states were rare except when matches were played.

The State Bank has declined as a cricket force in the 1970s. While it could still field a powerful national XI, its Bombay team has dropped to the lower bracket of the A-Division and relied heavily on its veteran players, Wadekar and Hanumanth. The career of Hanumanth has been restricted because he has risen to the position of manager of a division in a Bombay suburban branch and with such a responsible position could not practise as much. Indian cricket will suffer if the State Bank does not resume its cricket patronage on a significant scale for there is no other patron so well equipped to encourage the game in many centres throughout the country.

IN the 1970s there was an equally ambitious, but what proved to be short-lived, programme of cricket patronage launched at J. K. Chemicals, a company which ranked fourth in the private sector. J. K. Sports began in a similar vein to many other companies. In the early 1970s the company had a team in the E-and F-Divisions of the Times Shield competition but then some of the Directors decided that they would like to have a team, and preferably a winning team, in the A Division and initiated a programme of rapid expansion from the top. In order to implement a sound scheme J. K.'s took the advice of a number of lead-

ing officials and former Test players. On paper, many of the ideas developed at J.K. appeared viable: they selected Pataudi as the captain and sports director, a man respected for his leadership qualities and one with the experience to act as an effective liaison officer. A central notion was to create a good mixture of youth and experience: so the company combined senior players, such as Pataudi and Durrani, with more recent Test players, the Amarnath brothers and Gavri, together with younger players with Test potential such as Rajinder Singh Hans. It was also the company's idea to build up a balanced team with players from the various zones of the country. Although the headquarters of the firm was at Thana, about twenty-five miles from Bombay, most of the J.K. players came from outside the West Zone: the Amarnath brothers came from the North Zone; Durrani, Hans, and Laxman Singh from the Central Pataudi and Abdul Hai from the South. While J.K. players continued to play for their home states, they were brought to Thana and settled there by the company.

The J.K. cricket patronage was radically different from all other firms in that the company made no attempt to integrate cricketers into the business. They were taken on purely as sportsmen, in a manner reminiscent of some princes, for players had no work obligations whatever or, as one official at J.K.'s put it, with a delicate understatement, "we never insisted" that they come to work. This situation was not to the liking of all the J.K. sporting clients since a number of players went to the management 'so many times' to ask for work, possibly out of boredom but more likely because of insecurity, but their pleas fell on deaf ears. The company did not give cricketers a job, according to one of its spokesmen, because if they were placed in a 'continuous process job' in the factory, it would be difficult to release them. If this was the rationale for the policy, the company ignored the precedent of other firms which employed cricketers in the public relations or administrative branches where part-time work was feasible. Another argument put forward was that very few of the cricketers taken on had 'the qualifications to work in the firm'. This response could only be treated as another evasion to cover up the loose thinking behind J.K. Sports.

In the tradition of most other companies Nirlon wanted its cricketers to make a career with the company. Most of the company cricketers were graduates, or becoming graduates, and were employed in the advertising and publicity departments, rather than in the factory since employment there would create problems with all of the leave involved for sportsmen. The salaries at Nirlon ranged from Rs. 1,200 to 2,000 per month in 1978 even though the company employed only one Test cricketer.



Ajit Wadekar

Nirlon cricket salaries, which were based on overall qualifications, were probably among the highest available, and reflected the improving market rate in the 1970s.

Nirlon waited to launch its cricket programme until the company was 'doing well' so as to absorb the additional costs of patronage. There was a small commitment to tennis but the company's primary investment was in the one sport. Unlike other patrons, who expressed policy in terms of broader social goals, Sagar frankly admitted that success in cricket would bring the company free publicity and goodwill. The promotion of cricket could be regarded as an extension of company advertising or, more specifically, a reallocation of some Rs. 200,000 to 300,000 (the approximate annual cost of cricket salaries, touring expenses and equipment costs) from the annual advertising budget of two and a half million rupees. However, it would be wrong to see the Nirlon investment as based on one individual's self-interest or a company's self-aggrandisement, since Sagar believed that the establishment of a closely-disciplined professional office team, with a propensity for winning, was good not only for Nirlon, but also for the players and the national team as well. Sagar in this case, agreed with contractors that winning was an important consideration because winning reflected professionalism, a commitment to the firm, team work, discipline and hard training. One of the dangers of patronage, maintained Sagar, was that cricketers were treated like 'playboys' for this attitude would affect the way that they played the game. If an employee was encouraged to develop a professional attitude to his work and his play, he would bring a more businesslike competitive spirit to the game. It was for this reason that Sagar could contend that companies and corporations could sponsor the sport 'with the health of the game in mind'.

The Nirlon cricket team was successful in its first year in the A Division of the Times Shield reaching the final. Possibly in response to this

Sagar recruited Sunil Gavaskar from ACC to establish his team as the main rival to the Mafatlal eleven. Meanwhile, ACC which also lost Indrajit in 1978, slipped back from the A to the C Division. Its place was taken in the A Division by Century Rayon which employed Durrani as a professional.

The patronage of cricket by business houses and the banks is an India-wide phenomenon. It was estimated by one Bombay manager that, while there were about ten major patrons in Bombay there were about another fifteen outside, with a few in Delhi, several in Calcutta and Madras, and so forth. A separate history could be written of the evolution and development of patronage in a number of cities but it would be a repetition of this story with some variations from place to place. Bombay has provided the model for what happens elsewhere because the scale of patronage was much larger in India's cricket metropolis and because the salaries and conditions of employment here would affect the market elsewhere. In some instances cities have borrowed directly from the Bombay experience: Ahmedabad, for example, has introduced its own Times of India Shield.

Commercial patronage of cricket outside Bombay has only developed in recent years. During the 1950s many cricketers from outside Bombay depended on the Railways and other public concerns for jobs, while in the 1960s the State Bank was the major employer of cricketers. However by the 1970s there were a number of players employed by private companies such as Madanlal, who worked with Mohan Meakin Breweries at Ghaziabad (U.P.), Rajinder Singh Hans, employed in a prominent industrial house of the same state, and T. E. Srinivasan, in the service of a commercial firm of Madras. The growing interest of merchants and industrialists of Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Calcutta, Poona, Madras and numerous smaller cities of northern India in the promotion of cricket can only enhance the scope of patron-

Mohinder



age and intensify the competition for the leading players.

The story could also be elaborated in respect to the many minor firms of Bombay and elsewhere which played an important role in supporting the superstructure of patronage since they employ many good club cricketers. The smaller firms not only added to the glamour of the game, in that there was the prospect of economic reward for the moderately successful cricketer in addition to the star, but also provided the essential lower rungs in the ladder of patronage which made the task of recruitment easier for the major patrons. Then, too, there were many companies involved in ad hoc patronage, such as Colgate and Palmolive, which feature star cricketers in newspaper, radio and now television commercials. These patrons, too, added to the glamour of the game though their rewards were limited to the favoured few, such as Wadekar, Gavaskar and Bedi, and such companies were on the periphery of the great network of patronage.

Commercial patronage since 1947 has had a profound effect on Indian cricket both on and off the field. Above all it has provided a stability and a continuity in which there could be cricket expansion. While some patrons have tended to come and go, there have always been other firms to take up the slack. In fact an expanded commercial interest in the employment of cricketers has significantly raised salaries in recent times. While there have been variations in cricket recruitment and employment from company to company, most major firms have a similar outlook on patronage and even proceed along comparable lines. It was almost inevitable that any successful innovation in the recruitment, management and employment of cricketers, would soon become a general practice.

The player was the chief beneficiary of commercial patronage. With the support of the largest business houses behind him, the Indian player was secure career-wise and also cric-



Hanumant Singh

ket-wise since the firms not only provide job security but have made it possible for cricketers to lengthen their careers. Indian cricketers were encouraged to, and could afford to, stay in the game until their talents waned because their future was secure. In earlier decades India did lose some Test players prematurely but this situation was unlikely to be repeated given the expansion of patronage. Early retirement, on the other hand, has become quite common in other countries, such as Australia, which lacked a strong patronage network. Alan Davidson, for instance, retired when still in his prime partly because the claims of a business career cannot be delayed for too long; while Ross Edwards finished his Test career prematurely because he believed that he could no longer afford to tour overseas with the Australian team; and Paul Sheahan ended his Test career at an early age because of the demands of his career as a school teacher.

WHILE Indian cricketers were not professionals in the English sense, those who were in the employment of business houses and the banks were 'almost professionals'. A successful cricketer would spend much more time on the field than in the office during his playing days. The relationship between an Indian patron and his cricket client was a more significant one than an English county contract because the former was potentially lifelong whereas a county contract was limited in time.

Because there was a long term tie between the patron and client, Indian cricketers were more cautious in their response to the approach to Kerry Packer than the players of the West Indies, Pakistan and Australia where patronage networks were weaker. Bound as he was to a patron the Indian player was less of a free agent who could negotiate ad hoc contracts since these could possibly jeopardise his career. The Indian cricketer had to weigh the short term, but not inconsiderable, returns of a Packer contract against the longer term returns of a secure

career as a semi-professional cricketer.

Indian patrons were also cautious in their appraisal of World Series Cricket because their clients were already 'almost professionals'. If their players were to take part in further tournaments, they would turn up even less frequently at the office but, more important be unavailable for the host of domestic tournaments, state, club and office. Having carefully nurtured a patronage system over some decades, which businessmen believe was geared to the interests of the players and the game in that it has integrated them into business operations, they did not immediately approve of a system of patronage which rested on quite different assumptions from their own. Some patrons have already shown their hand and demonstrated their influence by a reluctance to permit clients to take up county contracts. While there were many West Indian, Pakistan and South African players in county cricket, there have been very few Indians, with Bedi, Engineer and Venkataraghavan the most notable exceptions. There was no likelihood that Bedi's example will provide a precedent for other players from the State Bank, in fact the reverse was more likely. Tata's was more sympathetic to Farokh Engineer when he decided to sign a county contract with Lancashire and to take up an executive position with a Yorkshire firm. Tata's gave Engineer an understanding that he could re-join the company if he decided to return to India. Because patrons have approved of contracts in the Lancashire and associated leagues, there has been an annual exodus of Indian players to this type of competition.

The absence of Indian players from the county circuit has denied them the experience against most of the top fast bowlers which would have provided invaluable experience for overseas tours. It is likely that the improvement in the standard of Pakistani cricket over the past decade is due in part to the county experience gained by most of its leading players. However, the opposition of the patrons was not the only reason for the limited number of Indian players in county cricket. There have also been a variety of personal factors which have led a number of Test players to decline county offers.

There was no one reason why business should support cricket so lavishly, and more than other sports, and, in the process make Test cricket possible in India. When asked why he supported cricket rather than its two rivals, Virendra Sagar quipped that 'I know nothing of hockey or soccer'. However, all businessmen have an ear attuned to the market, and cricket's wide appeal was an important element in commercial interest in a game. So while Indian cricketers depended on the patron for their livelihood, the continuing support of the cricket crowd made it worthwhile for the businessman to invest in cricketers.



Nikhil Bhattacharya

MUMTAZ, that beautiful glamorous girl who left films a couple of years ago and opted for marriage with a millionaire, creates a ripple of interest whenever she is in town. And she is always in and out of Bombay. Recently, there was a strong rumour that Mumtaaz wanted to make a film or two if she was given a good role. According to the grapevine she was approached by her good old friend Yash Chopra to act in a film for him. She is as pretty, if not more so, even after the baby, and can compete favourably with the present bunch of actresses. It is true that even today they say of her, "Our Mumu is our great Mumu, and no one can beat her!" Whenever she makes the rounds of parties on her frequent visits to Bombay, she draws oohs and aahs of admiration from the guests.



Rajesh Khanna thinking of old girlfriends

DOES anyone know why Zeenat Aman put on so much weight recently? Or why she was not even able to get into sleeveless dresses and all those revealing clothes she was so fond of? Because Sanjay Khan wanted her so. He likes his women fat and heavy, claims an insider. So it was for her lover-boy that Zeenat went about collecting all that flab. Now that they've split, Zeenat's producers are tearing their hair over the eight odd extra kilos on their heroine!

NEWCOMER Raj Babbar is gaining ground rapidly over the other new boys and also the current favourites like Mithun and company. This is worrying his colleague Deepak Parasher, who is rather slow in attracting roles and appreciation. Raj is perhaps the next newcomer to reckon with.



Testing time for Tina

TALKING of stars who were riding a high tide, reminds me of Rajesh Khanna. Recently he was in a very nostalgic mood and set off very surreptitiously to an old friend's house with another lady. It must have reminded him of his Anju days. Unfortunately the person he wanted to look up wasn't at home but she called up Rajesh the next day and they spoke about how they missed each other. But they carefully avoided any mention of Anju. Why doesn't Rajesh look ahead and stop thinking about his days of glory?

Dese XBB, INC

Tarun Chakrabarty



Oh, those extra kilos
Now we have
a flabulous Zeena



Khushsoorat Rekha

TALKING of newcomers Sanjay Dutt is said to have done very well in Rocky. And that once more, is unsettling a lot of solid male confidence all around. And little Miss Tina who was a little careless where her future with Sanjay was concerned, better watch out if she wants to keep her old steady...otherwise, with her loose behaviour, Sanjay Dutt might well cast her aside.

KHUSHSOORAT is another small film which might well turn into another Guddi. It is already doing very well. Kudos to Rekha!

KHAAS BAAT

IS there anything more vulgar than a man introducing himself as "M.A. (lit.) first class first"? Well, the other day this columnist ran into a Telugu director C. S. Rao, husband of actress Raja Sulochana. For thirty minutes this gentleman bombarded me with irrelevant, sanctimonious phrases. He wanted to comment on what went wrong with the Filmotsav '80 but chose to speak about the concept of *Rama Rajya* for the first 20 minutes. Excerpts from our conversation: "On *Rama Rajya*: In India we would rather speak of Rama, the one-woman god than Sri Krishna, the debauch. Film festivals often encourage debauchery. And in *Rama Rajya* these things should not happen. We should not behave like the depraved sex-crazy Americans. Delegates are not invited to bring their wives with them. Naturally they want to flirt with other women. Our festival committees should always extend invitations to the wives of delegates, specially those who come from abroad. Foreign delegates would then bring their wives and hence will not flirt". At this point I interjected: "What if a delegate wants to bring his girlfriend? Polanski would like to do it. And someone may bring his mistress". Rao retorted: "Don't talk to me about him. He raped a 13-year-old girl". I said: "That was a statutory rape. One guesses that the girl was willing..." The director asked sarcastically: "Do you want your 13-year-old sister or daughter to be raped?" I tried to explain to him that I didn't have sisters or daughters but the man went on and on, ranting about the sanctity of Indian women and the glory of Aryan culture. But the self-appointed preacher

wouldn't tell me when exactly he was married to Raja Sulochana. Certainly she isn't his first wife. And she wasn't the first woman in his life. How come the great Aryan culture allows such things?

WHY is there such controversy over a silly, temporary misunderstanding between K. Balachander the controversial, well known director and his favourite hero, Kamalahasan? Balachander was irritated by Kamalahasan's observation that the story of *Maro Charitra*, a very successful Telugu film directed by Balachander, may have been inspired by his own (Kamalahasan's) life. Balachander pulled up Kamalahasan for this observation at a public function, and the star immediately clarified his statement. The matter should have ended there, but some idle journalists, starved of hot gossip played up this minor misunderstanding. Some even wrote that Kamalahasan and K. Balachander won't be associated with any film in future. Well, Balachander has been assigned by producer L. V. Prasad to make a Hindi version of *Maro Charitra* entitled *Aur Ek Ithihas*. It will star Kamalahasan, Rathi Agnihotri and Madhavi, and everyone connected with the film is quite excited.

KANNADA films are life-savers for those Madras heroines who fail in Tamil films. A number of them have clicked in a big way in Karnataka. Apart from Lakshmi, there are Bharati, Saroja Devi, and Padmapriya. The last named has acted with top Tamil heroes of the early '70s: MGR and Sivaji. In fact, she was one of the heroines of MGR's last released film *Maduraya*.

WHEN MGR was available to play Robin Hood in his films, producer R. M. Veerappan (now a Minister in MGR's cabinet) reaped a rich harvest at the box office. But *Oru Velladu Vengai*

Agrathu, a film sponsored by him and starring Sivakumar and Saritha hasn't clicked with the public. Well, if MGR's Ministry is sacked, both Veerappan and the aging hero can embark on a joint venture.



Madhavi in
"Raja Parvati"

Meeta Sundarama Pandiyan. Since Dame Luck wouldn't oblige her, she migrated to Karnataka. Though she couldn't compete with Lakshmi and Bharati, she managed to get some plum assignments there. Among them is *Marulu Sarapani*, in which she was cast opposite Ashok, one of the younger heroes.

has been acting with every available hero, ranging from Kamalahasan to newcomer Prakash. She has been careful not to offend MGR by acting with heroes he (MGR) doesn't like. It is believed that MGR was rather hurt when Latha and Rajnikant were paired in *Sankar*. Salim Simon and gossip columnists predicted a heavy romance and a wedding. However even before the film was released producers who wanted to cast Latha and Rajnikant in more films dropped the idea. Rajni wore a sad expression, and would comment on every subject under the sun except Latha

WHO is MGR's new celluloid heart-throb? Is it true that a school-final student will be acting in his own production? Reliable sources deny that MGR's men have been considering some young women for future roles. Latha seems to be MGR's favourite even though she

PIOUSJI



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Beginning February 24

This week the Sun, Mercury and Kethu are in Aquarius, Venus alone is in Pisces, Mars, Jupiter and Rahu are in Leo, Saturn is in Virgo and Neptune and Uranus are in Scorpio. The Moon will be moving through Gemini, Cancer and Leo from Taurus.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Lovers are likely to come up against new hurdles. Elderly people will prove very cooperative and guide you. Your domestic front will prove very troublesome. Some people may get transfer orders. Letters will bring good news. This week is good for matrimonial and love affairs. Those at home will find their wants fulfilled. The weekend will prove particularly exciting. **Good dates:** 26, 27 and 1. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 1. **Favourable direction:** South-west.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) You will meet with mixed reactions this week. Examine all new developments carefully. Don't neglect your professional interests. Avoid all controversies. Businessmen are advised to go in for new contracts and acquire new stocks. You may have to go on short trips in connection with your plans. An old friend will oblige you. Check extravagant tendencies. **Good dates:** 27, 28 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 2. **Favourable direction:** South-west.



GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) You will face innumerable problems this week. In spite of your recent efforts you will feel dejected and disappointed. Some people will gain in sports and gambling. Take care of the health of your children, particularly those who are studying. Take things very seriously and give top priority to your personal problems. Businessmen are advised to enter into new contracts. Do not displease your business partners. **Good dates:** 28, 29 and 1. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 8. **Favourable directions:** South and East.



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) You may have to depend on the advice of others and pursue a new path to reach your goal. You may also have to seek a loan to meet urgent expenses. The week will be very pleasant and profitable. Some people will be promoted and others will buy new vehicles. A good week for matrimonial affairs. **Good dates:** 25, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 6. **Favourable direction:** South.



LEO (July 23 — August 22) A period of trial for businessmen and office-bearers. Try to keep your word and be a little more careful while dealing with your superiors. Businessmen should be careful about undertaking contracts or signing agreements. Love affairs and matrimonial alliances should be postponed. You will be able to solve your domestic problems and earn peace of mind. Improvements are indicated on the financial front. **Good dates:** 26, 28 and 1. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 10. **Favourable direction:** South-east.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Choose your friends carefully and do not embark upon dubious love adventures. Sorrow and disillusionment threaten you there. Safeguard your own health and that of womenfolk in the family. Attend to vocational matters seriously. Letters from a distant place will bring good news. **Good dates:** 26, 27 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 10 and 3. **Favourable direction:** West.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) Your dealings with business associates will prove fruitful and unexpected benefits may accrue to you. But deal tactfully with those in authority. Love affairs and litigation will not affect your original plans. Financially, you are very secure and you will enjoy a lot of good fortune. You will be rewarded for your devoted services. Differences among business partners are likely. At the weekend, a short journey is expected. **Good dates:** 25, 26 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 3 and 9. **Favourable directions:** North and East.



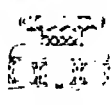
SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) More than average success is predicted this week. Partnership ventures will bring in a lot of money. Property deals will be decided in your favour. Do not hesitate in taking important decisions. Holidays are likely to be pleasant. Your domestic front will be lively and pleasant. A good week for love and matrimonial affairs. **Good dates:** 25, 27, 29 and 1. **Lucky numbers:** 6 and 3. **Favourable directions:** West and South.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) Minor gains through an elderly male relative are likely. The domestic front will remain pleasant and lively. You are very close to your cherished goal. Stand on your own ground. You need not worry about pending lawsuits and debts. You will gain in sports and speculation. A short journey is predicted. Your efforts will bear fruits in the future. **Good dates:** 24, 25 and 27. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 3. **Favourable directions:** West and North.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Despite some trouble, perhaps involving property, inheritance or legal matters, a successful and largely happy week awaits you. A lot of activity and sound health are also predicted. Love affairs and litigation will not affect your original plans. Financial expansion is likely. You will be confronted with family problems. **Good dates:** 26, 28 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 2. **Favourable direction:** East.



AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) You will achieve success on the financial front and unexpected benefits may accrue to you. You will find yourself very busy with your professional career. Your monetary position will improve rapidly. Give importance to domestic issues which will bring you happiness. Letters from far away places will provide new scope for advancement. A good week for lovers. **Good dates:** 24, 25, 27 and 1. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.

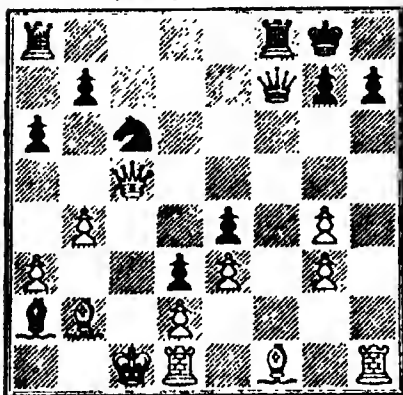


PISCES (February 20 — March 20) You will need plenty of rest to regain peace of mind. The results of your activities will not be commensurate with your efforts. Generally a dull week for you. Your health will not be good. Womenfolk will go in for new clothes, ornaments, presents, and modern gadgets. Children and young friends will contribute to your happiness. **Good dates:** 26, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 10 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South.

M B RAMAN

chess

Littlewood (Black) to move



Basman (White)

Position after White's 24th move

Friends of Chess

With the Aaronson Congress coming up next weekend, this is a good time to mention the Aaronson Masters Tournament played earlier this year. The Aaronson Masters is a valuable event, giving young players a chance to gain experience against international opposition. This year's tournament attracted a large entry including 13 international masters and two grandmasters. Gert Ligterink, fresh from his victory in the Dutch Championship, was widely favoured to win, while I felt that the young Spanish champion Manuel Rivas might be a good each-way bet. As it turned out, Paul Littlewood beat off the strong overseas challenge to take first place with a score of 7½/9, which also gave him a norm towards the international master title. A fine result for Paul, who has already represented England at junior international level, and on the basis of this has a very good claim for a place in the senior team.

Paul Littlewood's style is direct and powerful, and I give as an example his win over Michael Basman from the Aaronson Masters. If you feel that White's opening play in this game is rather silly, you may well be right, but Michael Basman has in the past won some very fine games with some very silly openings.

White M. J. Basman Black P. Littlewood

1. P-QN4, P-K4, 2. P-QR3, P-Q4, 3. P-K3, N-KB3, 4. B-N2, B-Q3; 5. P-QB4, P-B3; 6. P x P, P x P; 7. N-KB3.

White's strategy is to induce the advance P-K5 and thereby establish a strong outpost on Q4. Littlewood refuses to oblige.

7. . . . Q-K2; 8. N-B3, N-B3; 9. P-KR3, Q-O; 10. P-KN4? Michael does sometimes get rather carried away with his outlandish ideas.

10. . . . B-K3, 11. N-K2, P-QR3; 12. N-N3, P-K5; Black finally succumbs to temptation, though not without justification. White's set-up is too artificial.

13. N-Q4, N x N; 14. B x N, N-Q2; 15. Q-N3, N-K4; 16. B-K2, N-B3! The refutation of White's strategy. With the loss of his blockade on Q4 White's game disintegrates.

17. B-N2, P-Q5, 18. Q-Qt, B x N, 19. P x B, P-Q6, 20. B-KB1, P-B4; 21. Q-B1. Desperation, but on 21. P x P, R x P, 22. B-N2, Q-N4 he is defenceless.

21. . . . P x P, 22. Q-B5, Q-KB2, 23. Q-O-O. White seeks some salvation on this side of the board, but instead finds himself walking into a mating net.



23. . . . B-R7! 24. P x P; (DIAGRAM) 24. . . . N-R4! A neat touch, though the prozac 24. . . . QR-B1 also wins of course.

25. P x N, Or 25. Q x N, QR-B1+; 26. B-B3, Q-N6 forcing mate.

25. . . . QR-B1; 26. R-R5, R x Q+; 27. R x R, Q x B! Resigns.

HARRY GOLOMBEK

bridge

THIS DEAL from rubber bridge provided a neat example of self-strangulation. North-South held:

♠ AKQ1062
♥ 753

♦ —
♣ AJ94

N
W E
S

♠ 53
♥ AK
♦ KQJ1085
♣ K107

The bidding went:

SOUTH	NORTH
1♦	1♠
2NT	6NT
No	

Short and sensible. The Queen of hearts ren to declarer's Ace, East playing the 8. South led the King and Queen of diamonds, to which all followed low. Dummy discarded a spade and a heart. On the next diamond West played the Ace. The discard from his table was a little awkward. Declarer may, if the diamonds are not breaking, need five spade tricks or, at worst, four club tricks. Postponing the decision, South discarded dummy's last heart. East also threw a heart. The position was now:

♠ AKQ108

♥ —

♦ —

♣ AJ94

N

W E

S

♠ 53

♥ K

♦ 1085

♣ K107

West, naturally, led another heart, and now dummy was truly embarrassed. The declarer thought to himself:

'As the diamonds are not all good, I must pick up the remaining tricks from spades or clubs. If the spades don't break, I shall need the club finesse and for entry reasons I shall need to find West with the Queen, so the best chance must be to discard a club now and rely on the spades.'

But of course the spades proved disappointing, and as he had discarded a club from dummy South had nowhere to go for a twelfth trick. West's hand was:

♠ x ♥ QJ10x ♦ A9xxx ♣ Qxx

Somehow it wasn't at all easy to see in time that after two rounds of diamonds declarer must play off ♠ AK. When this suit does not break and the diamonds also disappoint, then South knows he must rely on the clubs.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



A TERRA COTTA of the Madonna and Child by Andrea delle Robbie, the fifteenth-century Florentine sculptor, provides the design of one of the two special stamps issued in the United States for use on the Christmas mails. The original sculpture is now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington. The other American Christmas stamp, in contrast, has a lively picture of a small boy on a rocking-horse. Canada has also chosen studies of the Madonna and Child for its three Christmas stamps. They reproduce early Renaissance paintings of the Flemish, German and Florentine schools, all from originals in the National Gallery, Ottawa. Childran's toys are featured on the Christmas stamps from Norway and Sweden. Among those in the Swedish series are a teddy-bear and a model of a fairground 'great wheel' made of the Hornby construction set, Meccano.



ONLY six poets have been honoured on British stamps. They are Burns, Gray, Keats, Scott, Shakespeare and Wordsworth.

Chaucer appears by proxy because a woodcut illustrating his 'Canterbury Tales' was reproduced on a 1976 stamp honouring William Caxton. British poetry has fared better on foreign stamps. Byron, for example, has been portrayed on issues from Greece, Hungary and Italy. The Italian stamp, showing the poet's statue by the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen, was issued in 1959, when a monument to Byron was inaugurated at the Villa Borghese. Almost half the members of Lit-Phil, the society which caters for collectors interested in 'literature on stamps', live outside Britain. The honorary secretary, Robert Dunbar, 7 Lester Terrace, Magheralett, Co Derry, will supply details of membership.

C.W. HILL

this india

prizes 30 for the entry given first



SIWAN: The Siwan SP, Mr J. K. Khanna is reported to have suspended one ASI of Raghunathpur police station on the charge of giving bribe on January 29. The SP told this correspondent that he had been to Raghunathpur police station for inspection and one ASI of Police handed him over an envelope and requested him to open at his residence. The SP suspected some foul play and opened the envelope then and there. It was containing some money and a small chit saying that he would pay this amount every month. The SP suspended the ASI on the spot.—*The Indian Nation* (Naresh C. Mathur, Patna)

SRINAGAR: Three people, including two Indian Airlines traffic assistants, were arrested by the police on February 6 for allegedly "molesting" a foreign tourist. Her name was given as Miss Carolyn Anderson of the Uni-

ted States. The arrests, according to the police were made on the basis of a complaint lodged by Miss Anderson with the police alleging that the two traffic assistants had made her to stay in a local house boat, when she was stranded here, following the cancellation of the Srinagar-Delhi flight three days ago in view of bad weather. Miss Anderson alleged in her statement that these two persons "molested" her in the boat.—*The Times of India* (Rita Jha, Bombay)

GORAKHPUR: A case of fake vasectomy operation has come to light after almost three and a half years. An editor of a local weekly, has revealed in a letter sent to Mr Sanjay Gandhi MP that on October 2, 1976 he had voluntarily undergone a vasectomy operation at Chauri Chaura, but when his wife gave birth to a son on July 7, 1977 he was shocked to know that his wife had become pregnant. In April again his wife conceived, and consequently he got his semen examined by a doctor, who declared that he had not been operated upon — *Northern India Patrika* (Rajneesh Batra, Allahabad)

NEW DELHI: A handcuffed under-trial yesterday (February 1) threw his shoe in the courtroom of Delhi's Chief Metropolitan Magistrate. The presiding officer, Mr K. P. Verma, took an evasive action as he saw the missile coming towards him. Mr Verma, however, did not order any action saying that the undertrial appeared to be in an unbalanced state of mind.—*Mid-Day* (Anil Basu, Bombay)

without comment

WHEN the Congress (I) can survive, why can't we?—Jagjivan Ram's comment on the danger posed by infighting in the Janata Party

SHE (Mrs Gandhi) must learn to separate her duties as a Prime Minister and that of an agitator who is leading a political Party. She must remember that she is under oath—Banarsi Das, UP Chief Minister

WILL it be too much to infer that such situations are being engineered by the Sanjay caucus to increase caste hatred on the one hand and encourage the feeling of bitterness between the administration and the people on the other?—Tarakeshwari Sinha on the Narainpur incident

IF my raising the voice in favour of the villagers of Narainpur amounted to contempt of court, I am not concerned. I have gone to jail many times in the last three years and am prepared to go once more—Sanjay Gandhi

THE police is too weak to tackle the situation and we have to defend ourselves — An unnamed youth of Parashigba quoted in *The Statesman*

THEY cannot say anything against me. So Kanti is made the target—Morarji Desai

IF managements do not like employees' behaviour, all the Government can say is that such behaviour has to be accepted. The master-servant relationship will not do—Krishna Pada Ghosh, West Bengal Labour Minister

THE English language has no word for it (the mass defection in Haryana)—Charan Singh

IN the present society when a starving man commits illegal acts, I do not consider it a crime—Jagjivan Ram

THEY (Russians) are here to consolidate the gains of our revolution, protect our land and secure peace in the region—President Babrak Karmal of Afghanistan quoted in *The Times*

HE (Muhammad Ali) jokes and plays and makes faces at kids. Not so much with me. Sometimes, he does, when there are guests—Veronica Ali

IN Bengal, it seems to me, there has always been an instinctive understanding of Shakespeare—Professor A. G. Stock in the M. M. Bhattacharyya memorial lecture of Calcutta university

india abroad

NEW YORK: A 42-year-old street pedlar from India has been accused of hiring an undercover detective to kill his sister and her daughter, the Brooklyn District Attorney's office said. District Attorney Eugene Gold said yesterday (January 23) that Yusuf Adam was mad at his sister for breaking up the marriage of her daughter and his brother-in-law. Adam, whose wife's maiden name also was Adam, was charged with offering \$3,000 for the murders of his sister Fatima Patel, 40, and her daughter Khadija Adam. Khadija Adam's husband Abdul Adam—the brother of Yusuf Adam's wife is said to be in India, having separated from his wife. When he was arrested at his Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, home on Tuesday (January 22) night, Yusuf Adam—a naturalised citizen from Bombay—allegedly told authorities Mrs Patel was a troublemaker because she had successfully pulled Khadija and Abdul apart. Brooklyn District Attorney Eugene Gold's office explained when Yusuf Adam and the undercover detective discussed the

plot, Yusuf had instructed that the murders take place on Tuesday (January 22) evening at his sister's home. "If" Yusuf allegedly told the "hit man", "Mrs Patel's two older sons happen to show up during the rubouts, kill them too"—*Hindustan Times*

CAPETOWN: An Indian shopkeeper was moved out of the premises he had occupied for 27 years yesterday (January 22) because they were in a "white area". Officials of the department of community development supervised the packing and removal of Mr Dawood Bawa Khalfey's goods. Newlands, the area which the shop was in, was declared a white area in 1961 but it was not until recently, when the property was sold, that Mr Khalfey was told he would have to move. He said he was offered new premises in a nearby coloured (mixed race) area, but could not afford the rent. Two hundred local residents signed an unsuccessful petition calling for Mr Khalfey to be allowed to stay — *Hindustan Times*



Kamalapati Tripathi

SHREWD PANDIT

KAMALAPATI TRIPATHI is well known for his Banarasi pandit lifestyle and it is not uncommon to see people going up to him and touching his feet as a mark of respect. As a matter of fact, it was this practice that earned him the sobriquet "*charan chroo Chief Minister*" (Chief Minister whose feet are touched). Panditji's earlier stint as Railway Minister coincided with the introduction of a superfast train between New Delhi and Varanasi, his hometown. There was one novel explanation for this step: that the purpose was to bring fresh Ganga water for Panditji's bath every day. Frivolity apart, now that the aging Congress (I) leader is back as the Union Railway Minister, a number of railway officials have been bitten by the *chandan-talak* bug. Even the higher-ups are no exception. Some go as far as to put a little *chandan* paste on their ear lobes, as if to complete the pandit look. One senior trade unionist recently pointed this out to the Railway Minister. Panditji is supposed to have smiled and said "*Maine dekha hai. Mere chale jaane ke baad yeh log ise dho dalenge*" (I have noticed it. As soon as I leave the Ministry, they will wash it off). Obviously the antics of the officials do not impress the pandit.

FEUDING BROTHERS

EVEN while they raise slogans for the dissolution of State Assemblies, Congress (I) leaders are still busy with their own faction feuds. The situation in Madhya Pradesh is a case in point. For a number of years, the Congress in that State has been divided into two camps, one led by P. C. Sethi and the other by V. C. Shukla. Now that P. C. Sethi is in the Union Cabinet and Shukla is out of it, the former is using every possible

Sethi



Imagemakers

means to gain greater advantage over his rival. He organised a rally in New Delhi on January 30, for which around 30,000 people were brought all the way from MP in special coaches which were attached to the long distance trains coming from the south via Madhya Pradesh. The Shukla faction, instead, planned a demonstration at Bhopal on February 7 since the prospects of gathering crowds at the State capital were brighter. As soon as news of this plan reached Sethi's ears he set about arranging to sabotage it. He tried convincing Mrs Gandhi that there was no need for a rally at Bhopal. Surprisingly first Mrs Gandhi and later the AICC (I) leadership accepted his point of view. A group of frustrated young activists from Shukla's camp went to Sethi in order to try and change his hostile stand on their rally. But Sethi would not be moved. He retorted: "*Kya bewakufi kar rahen hai aap log! Kabhi kisi ne MA karna ke baad matric ka imtehan diya hai?*" (You are acting foolishly. Has anyone ever sat for the matriculation examination after passing his MA?). Obviously he was referring to his own rally in the capital as the MA for the Madhya Pradesh unit of the Congress (I).

What has further demoralised the young Congress (I) Party members in Madhya Pradesh is the fact that there is no Youth Congress (I) committee in the State.

TEMPORARY RESPITE

THE appointment of P. V. Narasimha Rao as External Affairs Minister has served to solve Channa Reddy's problems for the time being. Rao used to be godfather of the dissident camp which had made life difficult for the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister. It may be recalled that only three of the Party's 42 nominees in Andhra Pradesh for the Lok Sabha poll were chosen by Channa Reddy himself. This was due to the presence of Narasimha Rao on the Congress (I) Parliamentary Board. Now that Rao has become busy with diplomacy he has reportedly lost interest in the faction fights that take place in his State. Channa Reddy's other opponents, notably K. Rajamallu, Jagannath Rao and T. Anjaiah have also fallen out with one another, although they will not admit it publicly. One dissident MLA lamented: "They will now make up. It is people like us who will always be at the receiving end from Channa Reddy."

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN



from the Congress (I) are spreading these lies to discredit me. Among those people who accompanied me to Parasbigha, one was a bhumihar and the other a rajput. Creating trouble and then blaming others for the incident is a feature of fascism. The incident was well planned. It was done for the purpose of discrediting the State Government, so that they

(Congress-I), could say that there is no law and order in the state and ask for the resignation of the government. And as far as the Dohia incident is concerned, it was grossly exaggerated. But incidents like Parasbigha, which had its roots in land disputes, will continue. We have a feudal order here and people still own thousands of acres of land. And along

with this we have the usual traits of a feudal order : gangsterism. So the only way of bringing an end to such incidents is to bring an end to this feudal society".

The fact is that the incidents at Parasbigha and Dohia have made caste conflicts in the district more acute. On February 8, Nival Kishore a bhumihar was murdered in Sarthua village, two kilometres from Parasbigha. And there is an apprehension that Parasbigha and Dohia might be repeated in other parts of Bihar. True, the administration has to take a part of the blame for not anticipating the carnage, especially since the disputes in Parasbigha were continuing for quite some time. But, as long as caste and the feudal order continue to be an integral part of our society, particularly in the virulent shapes as exist in Bihar, it would be difficult to prevent a Parasbigha or a Dohia from being repeated. ■



Women crying in Sukhdeo Bhagat's house.

An old man sits in isolation in the courtyard of a house in Dohiya



The land grabbers

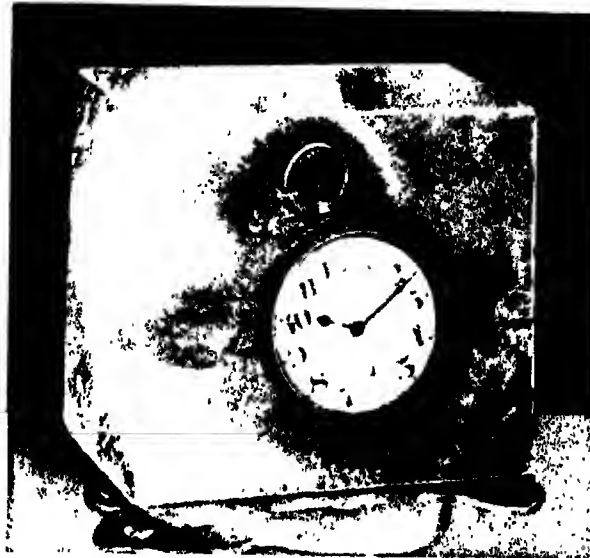
IN Bihar, where land disputes and gangsterism go hand-in-hand, several groups of gangsters have emerged, based along caste lines, who capture land forcefully for a particular landlord and even resort to murder to settle scores over land disputes. The rates they charge are very high. The atrocities at Parasbigha, for example, are suspected to have been committed by Lakhsman Singh's gang from Pall district, which only works for the bhumihars. Similarly, a gang from Asthawa which works for the kurmis is said to have committed the atrocities in Belchi.

Their mode of operation is quite simple. A landlord contacts the leader of a particular gang and tells him what has to be done. The payment is made in advance and on the decided day the attack is launched. In certain cases the landlord's men join hands with the gangsters. As soon as the work is done, they disappear in different directions. These gangs are also employed by politicians, especially during election time to capture booths. As a result they are promised protection by the Parties or candidates they have worked for.

There has been a proliferation of such gangs, especially since the backward castes have started asserting themselves. And they have been called upon more often to capture land for the forward caste landlord and terrorise the backward castes and the harijans. In fact, they operate as private armies in some villages.

A. R.

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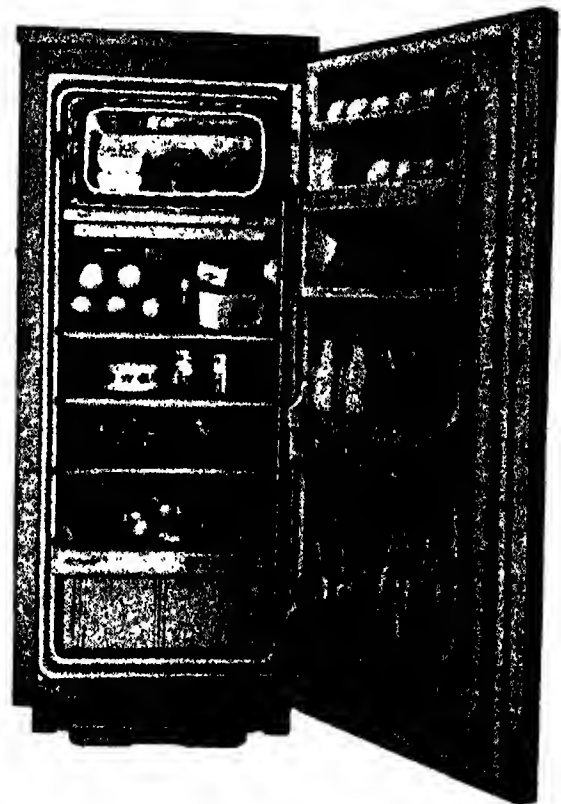
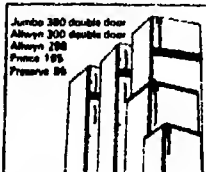
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SUNDAY



SEX AND THE SIZZLING SANYASI

By PRITISH NANDY

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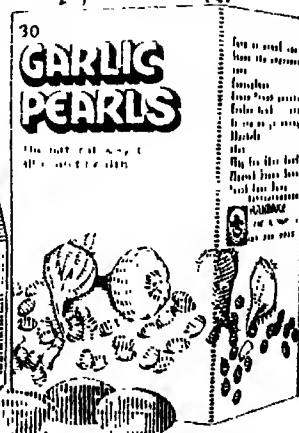
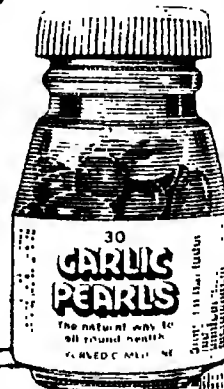
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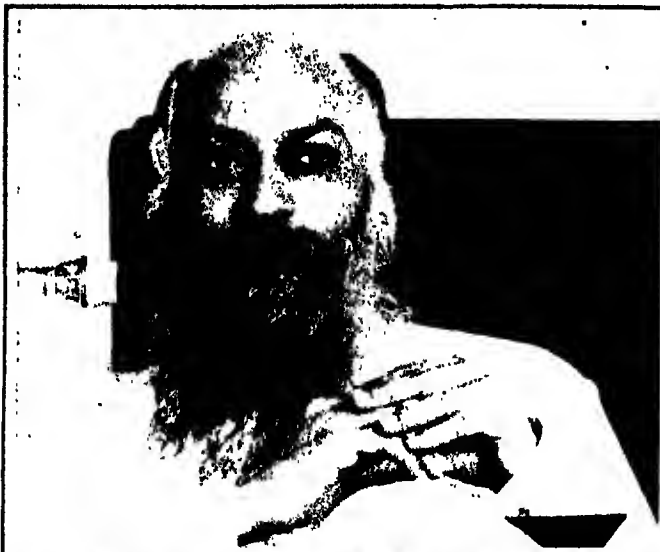
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Everyone knows that the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is a best seller, but this week's cover feature shows just why this is true. Rajneesh has managed to sell the relevance of sex in a traditional society, something which only the brave succeed in doing. The fact that he writes wonderful prose is a bonus.

Nikhil Bhattacharya



Mike Brearley was not the easiest of cricketers to track down, but when he finally gave SUNDAY an exclusive interview, he was delightfully frank on a variety of subjects. The former philosophy don explains why the practical side of captaincy fascinates him, speaks about his Test debut and even admits that Indian pyjamas are his favourites.

This week, we begin new sections and columns which, we hope, you will find as interesting and useful as we hope to make them. Kewal Varma and Barun Sengupta hardly need an introduction. From this week onwards, they will alternately write on power and politics. They are both active, senior journalists, still on the political beat, not moth-eaten "intellectuals" living in cocoons. Their views should be provocative and their reporting well-informed. We also introduce sections called *The World* and *Living*. The headings are self-evident, and we hope you enjoy these sections. Finally, we bring to SUNDAY another writer who readers should surely remember, and this time on a regular basis: the well-known Bombay lawyer A. G. Noorani. He begins a fortnightly column on civil liberties. Apart from his legal prowess, Mr Noorani's close association with Amnesty International makes him the ideal person to write such a column.—Editor

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Cover transparency of Rajneesh courtesy Rajneesh Foundation and of Mike Brearley by Nikhil Bhattacharya

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Divide and fall

IT is a pity that the opposition Parties failed to unite, "Move, countermove, stalemate" by Ajoy Bose (January 27). There are many experienced politicians in the opposition Parties who could act as an effective check on the Government, but unfortunately they are over ambitious and extremely selfish. They are involved in infightings and personal rivalries and are bringing about more disunity than unity. R. K. Gulati, Siliguri.

THE article reveals the true state of the opposition in Parliament. It seems that the opposition Parties do not intend to form a common front against the Government. The reason: They want to maintain their respective identities. If they have an understanding on some basic issues as the author says, then the Parties can both unite as well as maintain their identities. Prahlad Ghosh, Calcutta.

Some "direction"

TOOSHAR PANDIT, while asking S. Nihal Singh a question remarks: "Perhaps, one solution could be the inclusion of the editor in the board of directors" in "An editor must be free to edit", (January 20). I think no purpose will be served by the inclusion of the editor in the board of directors, if the board is only an organ which carries out the wishes of the managing director, who effectively controls the board because he has managed to corner the shares. This is precisely the case in *The Statesman*. Will the inclusion of an editor in the board of directors make any difference? S. Gupta, Calcutta.

NOW that Mrs Gandhi has come to power with an absolute majority, the opposition has a greater responsibility in Parliament. It is, therefore, regrettable that the various Parties maintain different opinions on many common issues. They should keep in mind the interests of the common people. Chitta Ranjan Pal, 24-Parganas.

I FULLY endorse the view of Mr Ravindra Varnia in "How they will oppose" (January 27). In Parliament it is the duty of the opposition to logically debate an issue and not to create trouble. The number of opposition members may be few, but that, I think, could be amply made up by the quality of debate. We need not have any apprehensions about the fact that there are no recognised opposition Parties, in Parliament. Pratibha Roy, Begusarai.

IN India, the opposition has never acted as a group. Only some individual members of the opposition have been vocal in their criticism of the Government. So why bother whether the Parties in the opposition unite or not? In Indian politics, the rule is: 'The winner takes all, the loser has to be content with his individual brilliance'. The exception to this rule was of course the weak Janata Government. Ratikant Rath, Sambalpur.

I WAS really surprised to find that not a single MP from the Left bloc was interviewed for your cover story. P. R. Bhattacharjee, Cooch Behar.

M. J. AKBAR's article, "Will the opposition self-destruct" (January 27), was simply brilliant. He comprehensively assembled the stray events during the election campaign of the various political Parties and put them in the proper sequence to make his point. It gave us a clear

Matchless

THE Madras Test Match has been superbly narrated by David McMahon and the photographs by G. Karthik were an added attraction. The author has appreciated Kapil Dev for his excellent performance. However, it was Dilip Doshi in the second innings, who captured the two top Pakistani wickets: Javed Miandad and Wasim Raja which gave the Indians a victory. B. N. Bose, Jamshedpur.

SUNIL GAVASKAR'S 166 was a lesson in professionalism. He demonstrated to the Pakistan cricket team the art of building up an innings. A lesson they should have paid heed to. J. S. Acharya, Hyderabad.

picture of what might happen in the near future. Mrs Gandhi can now "legitimately hope for one thing": disunion among the opposing Parties. If this does not happen, then we can expect the victorious Party to indulge in scheming to achieve their goal. But if good sense prevails among the opposition leaders, then they should resist the temptation of power. Sunil K. Singh, Patna.

UNDOUBTEDLY, mutual cooperation is extremely essential if the opposition intends to be effective both at the Centre as well as in the States. Recently, the Government managed to have the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies Bill passed by the Rajya Sabha. This was only possible by mustering the crucial support of some opposition members since the ruling Party is in a minority in the House. It remains to be seen whether the opposition can emerge united. Maharaj K. Koul, Srinagar.

IN India, which is the world's largest democracy, a strong opposition is essential. The Lok Dal, the Janata and the Congress (U) should reunite to form an effective opposition. In the absence of this we shall be doomed to a single Party rule. Jaya Chohan, Secunderabad.

HATS off to M. J. Akbar. The article was indeed thought-provoking. As it has been pointed out the opposition leaders will destroy themselves if they continue their innighting. Their engagements with innighting and out-manoeuvring one another not only made them a laughing stock but also saw the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. They are themselves to blame for their downfall. T. S. Sethuraman, Bombay.

No peace

R. N. Datta in his letter to *SUNDAY* (December 30) mentioned that the movement in Assam was peaceful. I would like to report an incident. In November 1979, my uncle, a non-gazetted officer of the Assam Government went for marketing in Gauhati. He was physically assaulted by some Assamese boys which caused him to bleed profusely. His only fault was that he was a Bengali. I cannot go in to details for fear of further repercussions. Besides there have been other murders as well. Can these and all the other incidents which have been reported in the national Press belong to a peaceful movement? H. Choudhury, Shillong.

Setting it right

THE article "Student Power Fails" by Gurbir Singh, (SUNDAY, January 27) is inconsistent. In the first paragraph he compliments us for running the college as an industry and for profit. However in the next paragraph he thinks very poorly of our business acumen, since he claims that we are offering to sell property worth Rs 80 lakhs at a discount of 50 per cent.

In the fourth paragraph Gurbir Singh seems to have hit upon the right points as far as the difficulties faced by the various educational institutions are concerned. However, we would like to state that we are not running skeleton services in our college. Except for some language classes, we have not closed any other departments. In fact, we are now running some vocational classes so as to help the students when the time comes for them to find jobs.

As far as the issue of the payment of arrears is concerned, our case is very well known to the people of Goa. I do not want to repeat this here except to state that we are fully convinced of our case and that all the knowledgeable authorities are in full sympathy with us: This issue of payment of arrears has been used for political purposes to create strife in our college. The reason behind our strong attitude in this case was because our college has over the last one or two years become very politicised, a trend which is not conducive to an effective education. Damaging college property and threatening the principal is the type of hooliganism that our institutions would definitely not like to encourage. Hence we were left with no choice but to be firm on this issue. In any case Mr Singh seems to have "slightly" exaggerated the so-called support from the students. After the strike was over, I went to the college to address a few students. Mr Thumpi, the volatile Tamilian, said to me that they would be getting the student mandate in the elections that were to be held shortly afterwards, as far as this issue was concerned. I would like to inform you that Mr Thumpi and his group were defeated and also that Mr Thumpi is no longer in our college. Hence, the 900 "students" who requested our principal to leave the college on August 8 seems to be a very strange figure considering that the college has about 1200 students.

I am also surprised at the generosity of the ex-students who contributed Rs 100 each towards administration costs for running the college for about a week when the Margao Students' Council illegally occupied the premises of our college. The same ex-students were very vocal in the case of the fee rise proposed by the University.

Gurbir Singh very glibly condones hooliganism throughout his article. He also seems to have a very poor knowledge of the issues involved in our college as well as those in France

In 1968, by making a comparison between the two. In any case I have a very poor impression about Gurbir Singh's journalistic capacity. He has not approached us or our institution to cross-check many of the events and issues that he has mentioned, including statements that are attributed to me. I would have thought that this would have been a prime requirement of any ethical journalist.

There is a small group of vested interests in the city of Margao which is jealous of the fact that we have the necessary resources (both financial and organisational) to run a college. They would like to do anything that is possible to personally attack our organisation and use any event that they can lay their hands on for such an attack. The teachers and students played into their hands and are now suffering the consequences. The issue that was involved had nothing to do with the payment of arrears, but a pure and simple exhibition of naked power at its worst.

Earlier I had mentioned that the college is running some vocational classes. For this the entrance fee is a very nominal one only, to cover the cost of the material that is handed out in the class. The classes are conducted by the personnel of the industry, except for the Library Science course which is conducted by the Librarian of the college. I would like to inform you that a very large majority of the industry faculty comes from the Chowgule Organisation. We would like to inform Mr Singh that this is not the way to run

an industry. During the college day function on March 31, 1979, I clearly indicated to the students that to run this college they would have to finance a deficit of Rs 4.5 lakhs a year.

What puzzles me more is the fact that this article has appeared after such a long time lapse. It does give me a very strong impression that the intention is not to state the case of the teachers or the students, but something beyond. In this whole issue the journalist's profession has played a very unethical role. It gives me an impression that Gurbir Singh feels that the journalist's profession means staying in his room and writing a "story" about events based on information that has been handed to him while he is in a comfortable position. The only correct information in the article is the reference to my being "natty, mustachioed and handsome".

Ashok V. Chowgule, Goa.

IN your well-researched article on the students' strike in Shrinati Parvati-bai's College of Arts and Science, Goa, you quote the principal of Dempo College, Goa, as having said: "These colleges are part of industrialists' efforts to gain prestige as philanthropists". This brings to my mind the words of the famous poet Prithvi Nandy: "A poet has to survive and benevolent industrialists, at least in this country, are rare. Benevolence is a rare virtue and where it does exist it is usually an income tax saving device."

(Dr.) Jose Rangel, Goa.

Fearless

CONGRATULATIONS to SUNDAY and Barun Sengupta for publishing "How the Cabinet was formed" (January 27). After Mrs Gandhi's return we have not read such an informative article anywhere. I agree with the author that today many journalists are scared of writing some well-known facts.

K. J. Ranganath, Bangalore.

BARUN SENGUPTA wants to show that Mrs Gandhi is dependant on Sanjay Gandhi to achieve her aims. This means the country is being run by him. However, Mrs Gandhi is intelligent and is capable of running the country. She may take advice but that does not mean she is doing what Sanjay wants her to do.

A. C. S. Gautam, Jabalpur.

Discarding theories

"A MARXIST who understood the Indian situation" (January 27) is not only Brahmanand's reminiscences of Acharya Narendra Dev but is also a criticism of the communist movement in India. We are gradually arriving at an understanding that equality is a matter of feeling rather than theories.

Baidyanath Mukherjee, 24-Parganas.

Diplomatic defence

I COMMEND Abu Abraham's views in his timely article "Yunus is unique". He did well to defend the status of the Press and the role of journalists during the Emergency. He succeeded in calling a spade a spade in a very diplomatic manner. It is an undeniable fact that if journalists surrender to the whims of authority, the Press will never be effective. The role played by the *Indian Express* during the Emergency deserves praise in this respect. The subtle observations of its journalists were widely acclaimed. Such journalists who remain firm and adhere to their own convictions can only serve to raise the image of the Press. In this respect I feel that both Arun Shourie and S. Mulgaoka proved their strength and mettle and in the process, set remarkable examples.

Abu rightly pointed out that Yunus's manifestations were "gentle and harsh, sentimental and tough, idealistic and pragmatic, warm and cold". One cannot help but agree with his remarkable contention that "loyalty and patriotism can at times be overdone but no one can deny their supreme value for a nation that continues to struggle against heavy odds".

Jasvinder Singh, New Delhi.



COVER STORY

JUST one brief look at his bearded face and those piercing, magnetic eyes and you know almost at once that you have met the sexiest of them all. The macho man. The all-male Adonis, presiding deity in his Olympus at Pune. The man with the golden gun loaded with bullets that hit the bull's eye of instant nirvana. Carpetbagger, dream merchant, the ultimate superstar of superconsciousness: The Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh.

Of all the freaks, frauds, godmen, gurus and con men who promise you the verdant valleys of beatitude and cross your murky, hedonistic path in dreary monotony every day, the Bhagwan Rajneesh is by far the sharpest, wittiest, and most delightfully original. He is not just a Bacchic overlord, every horny hireegee woman's dream come true — but also, coincidentally, the writer of some of the most lyrical prose I have read in a long time. Religious prose, I mean. A cross between the Egyptian mystic, Kahlil Gibran, the Marquis de Sade and, if you will forgive me, Groucho Marx. At once, gentle and poetic, simple and earthy, sensuous and tactile. At times, even rip roaring. And invariably, exquisitely packed — like a simple cologne from the house of Givenchy.

In other words, the Bhagwan is an absolute sure seller. A blue chip investment for any publisher who has an unerring eye for the quick buck and yet has a reputation to preserve. And that is perhaps why some of the finest names in international publishing have stumbled over each other in their efforts to publish and publicise the sayings of this devilishly handsome dervish who runs his religious factory from the unlikely industrial township of Pune, where thousands of his orange-clad sanyasins from all over the world are grouping towards a cumulative nirvana even as they celebrate their one big orgiastic live-in at the ashram. Harper and Row, De Voss, Thames and Hudson, Dutton, Sheldon Press, and even our own humble Motilal Banarsidass and



SEX AND THE SIZZLING SANYASI

Copulate away to glory, says
the Bhagwan Rajneesh

By PRITISH NANDY

Orient Paperbacks brought out many of the Rajneesh tracts, most of them explaining how to reach godhead through the crotch — before the worldly Bhagwan discovered how much he was losing out on royalties and decided to publish them himself.

Unlike others who have tried the same thing and failed, Rajneesh has done well for himself.

This is one such book, beautifully brought out by the Rajneesh Foundation, and loaded with some very attractive photographs of the Bhagwan himself — smiling enigmatically, praying, talking, preaching, blessing his devotees, in fact, doing everything but what he preaches. For that, he has included some very lovely photographs from Khajuraho, printed in a rich sepia but not particularly explicit. But then, the Bhagwan is rarely explicit — even in his discourses. He prefers the innuendo, the subtle hint. Particularly when he is on the subject of the libido.

Yet Rajneesh is not just a best seller. He has the sure touch of class, which perhaps explains his elite band of disciples — many of them cele-

brities, most of them outrageously rich. His is a different ball game from that of our more home-grown, indigenous peddlers of the faith — people like the Satbya Sai Baba of Puttapurthi or Dadajee, Bengal's own contribution to this, the fastest growing industry in the land; or the itinerant sadhus and fakirs who sell their exotic wares not just in the Himalayan hinterlands but in almost every city and town, every village and taluka of this vast subcontinent.

What hits you first about this book is not just its attractive layout and accomplished packaging. It is the godman himself. An outrageously handsome man in his late forties, with quicksilver eyes and ash blonde locks cascading onto his shoulders. He stares at you from almost every format of the book, draped in inviting, loose outfits that cling to his well preserved body. He is the sadhu with the slinky, seductive looks — the veritable Rudolph Valentino of his trade. Sensuous, scintillating, supremely self-confident. And the moment you get down to reading his dissertations on sex and superconsci-

ousness, you discover that the Bhagwan knows his onions if nothing else.

It is a tough job selling the relevance of sex in our traditional, hide-bound society — even though historically we were one of the first to discover its myriad possibilities. Today the hydra-headed monster of middle class morality always manages to raise its ugly visage the moment someone openly discusses the birds and the bees under a starry firmament. You may snuggle up to your woman in the dead of night and do the ritual heaving and sighing in surreptitious whispers but by daytime she must lose her sexuality completely and remain the time-honoured Sati Savitri — mother, sister, daughter, et al. The embodiment of virtue, totally desexed. The eternal, untouched lotus — an absurd symbol of the chaste, the virtuous and the pathetically naive.

Sex today is a dirty word and it cannot be discussed from public platforms. For how can you share the same vehicle for debating the virtues of genital contact that is used by our decrepit, infirm political sca-



lawags to expound the greatness of our hoary past? Sex makes a strange conversation opener in polite social talk and yet Rajneesh has managed to get away with precisely that amidst a volley of bouquets and brickbats. And even if we do it grudgingly, we must concede that in his own way this sensuous sanyasi is a lone frontiersman. To take on Morarji Desai at a time when the Janata Party was at the height of its power and call him an impotent old man stupid and indecisive, requires not just wisdom but also foolhardiness of a special kind. The Bhagwan wears this very special talisman of courage.

From musty, middle class homes and cloistered shelves Rajneesh has aired sex in broad daylight. He has celebrated eros with rare courage. And on his divine shoulders he has taken on the onerous burden of organising sex education classes for the urban elite and unveiled for them the innumerable delights of the physical act. Sans inhibitions, sans guilt. Sans moral hangups.

Rajneesh has hoodwinked the smug, contented moral pundits who had arrogated to themselves the role of our conscience keeper and shouted from the rooftops that sex, after all, can be great fun. And for this, if for nothing else, one should respect this man. He has blown this whole business of guilt skywards and lent a new legitimacy to the man-woman relationship in all its connotations. The emotional, the physical and the intellectual; all three facets of sex are as crucial to our lives, says this permissive padre, and thus open the floodgates of fun and fantasy.

The five discourses published in this book are eye openers. He gave these lectures in Bombay in 1968 and helped many, I am sure, to drop layers of blinding wool from their eyes. The experience must have been absolutely dizzy! Imagine being told, when you come to wash your guilty conscience and sins at the Bhagwan's feet, that what you call the root of evil and equate with sex is actually divine! That in a night's exclusive rumble and tumble there may lie the straight and narrow path to salvation! That to love a woman's body is the first step in loving God himself!

For Rajneesh to have accomplished what he has over these past few years is to recognise the value of



professionalism. The Bhagwan makes no compromise on quality. His books are well written, intelligently edited by his disciples, excellently illustrated, beautifully printed and packaged. The market just laps them up—and you can hear the cash registers ringing away merrily, from Ferozeshah Mehta Road to the suburbs of Houston. This is no mean achievement for a man who just a few years back was sniffing and snorting in the back alleys of Jabalpur with his head in the air and his hands dug deep into his pockets, trying to make up his vagrant mind if that thing between his legs could get him places.

From a stuffy, textbook-wielding pedagogue in Saugar University, where philosophy was the source of bread and butter and philandering a little spot of diversion, to the mighty position of a Bhagwan is no easy jump—not even in our polytheistic culture, where gods and goddesses have a field day. Rajneesh, however, has done it and we must sit back and applaud. It needs guts, it needs conviction—perhaps it needs a dash of charisma and good looks, which Rajneesh has in plenty—but, above all, it needs a special kind of brinkmanship. That quality of recklessness and daredevilry which metamorphos-

es a dead-end academic into a daring buccaneer, a suave carpetbagger masquerading as a sanyasi and taking the entire world by storm.

One must hand it to him. Rajneesh has consciously and deliberately transformed himself from a wheezy old Spinoza-spouting philosophy teacher into the glamour boy of the contemporary religious scene, with a more attractive melange of orange-clad mannequins than even Yves St Laurent could have organised for one of his haute couture shows. He has his disciples in distant lands. His discourses have been translated into languages as far flung as Japanese and Dutch, Italian and Danish, German and Portuguese, Spanish and French. He has meditation centres all over India, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Nepal, Costa Rica, England, Scotland, France, Spain, Holland, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland, West Germany, Belgium, East Africa and, of course, the United States of America, where anyone with a kink can make his fortune! What is perhaps more interesting, however, is that the Bhagwan has also opened up shop in two cities of South Africa, where Indian enterprise is otherwise strictly banned in protest against the





policy of apartheid practised by the ruling government!

In the west, Rajneesh is a rage and countless young people have freaked out on him and his touch-therapy sex education classes at the meditation centres that his disciples run, at reportedly great profit. Even our own muscle men and razmataz beauties from Hollywood take the easy three hour drive to Pune whenever they can get away from the whirring cameras, to celebrate the therapeutic orgies that the Bhagwan recommends and often organises for them and the other ashram inmates.

Look at what Rajneesh promises you if you only stop straying and lend him your ear. The genesis of affection, the pinnacle of meditation, the ecstasy of a permanent orgasm culminating in samadhi, a delightful variety of dalliance, the road to be-

coming a better man or woman—in other words, a rip roaring, successful trip to Shangri-la that others have only talked about but never really offered with such conviction, nor with such fun! It is a package deal heavily subsidised by Rajneesh. It is like doing the South Sea Islands in fourteen days and returning with memories and Instamatic photographs that last a lifetime. You either take it or lump it. But if you decide on the latter you would surely be the loser! For ask Rajneesh the way to salvation and it will be surely shown. And if all this spirit-cleansing hullabaloo does not interest you,

then just ask him a few gut-level basics on how to prolong your orgasm and the mystery will be surely unearthed.

Rajneesh has a peculiar style, an underplayed flamboyance that attracts you to him immediately. His lectures are punctuated by parables and, Jesus-like, he tells you stories and feeds your bogged-up intellect with exotic philosophical hors-d'oeuvres that you slowly begin to enjoy. Rajneesh has this tremendous potential for making things appear simple and ethereal. His language is forthright, direct and often very, very beautiful. Here is a sample of why he feels that man and sex cannot be separated:

Have you never realised that the blooming of a flower is an expression of passion, that it is a sexual act? A peacock dances in full glory: a poet will sing a song to it; a saint will also be filled with joy—but aren't they aware that the dance is also an overt expression of passion, that it is primarily a sexual act? To please whom does the peacock dance? The peacock is calling its beloved, its spouse. Papiha is singing; the cuckoo is singing; a boy has become an adolescent; a lass is growing into a woman. What is all this? What play, what *leela* is this? These are all the indicators of love, of sexual energy. These manifestations of love are the transformed expressions of sex—bubbling with energy, acknowledging sex. Throughout one's whole





life, all acts of love, all attitudes and urges of love, are flowerings of primary sex energy.

Rajneesh is a religion-baiter in another sense. He rejects ritualised faith and the new religion he propagates cuts across the formal structures of Christianity, Hinduism, Zen Buddhism and Sufism. He attacks the run-of-the-mill priests with gentle venom and asks his followers to rip the mask off pretension and hypocrisy, sham and make-belief. Give up your inhibitions, he says, for you have nothing to lose but your boredom, the all-encompassing ennui that is the most dangerous disease of our times. Spurn hypocrisy, the Bhagwan urges. The same people who covet another's wife in private, speak of virtue in public. Those who harbour lust in their hearts, try to wear the mask of chastity on their faces. So-called religion and culture have poisoned our minds and kept sex under a bushel. Those who are anti-sex are anti-everything that is natural. These are the people who create conflict and incite violence and war. Prudery has become an obsession and the urge to stay away from openly discussing sex has ultimately made man a slave to it, according to the Bhagwan. The repercussions of pent up energy have harmed mankind terribly. Tradition has destroyed virtue instead of upholding it. The act of sex from an exhilarating, exciting experience has become a shameful routine and the more we indulge in it, the more guilty we feel. Thus grows our sum total of self-hate as the violence grows inwards. This is what Rajneesh considers perversion, the violation of truth.

What I want to say is this: sex is divine. The primal energy of sex

has the reflection of God in it... End this enmity with sex. If you want a shower of love in your life, renounce this conflict with sex. Accept sex with joy. Acknowledge its sacredness. Receive it gratefully and embrace it more and more deeply... My conjecture is that man had his first luminous glimpse of samadhi during the experience of intercourse. Only in the moments of coitus did man realise that it was possible to feel such profound love, to experience such illuminating bliss. And those who meditated on this truth in the right frame of mind, those who meditated on the phenomenon of sex, of intercourse, came to the conclusion that in the moments of climax the mind becomes empty of thoughts. All thoughts drain out at that moment. And this emptiness of mind, this void, this vacuum, this freezing of the mind is the cause of the shower of divine joy.

Thus having advocated the merits of having a good and healthy free-for-all in bed, Rajneesh goes as far as even telling us how to enjoy our daily bread.

Even after a lifetime of sexual experience we never reach anywhere near that supreme stage, near that divinity... You may be sceptical that an experience that is usually of a moment's duration can be prolonged for three hours, so I will give you certain pointers. If you heed them, the journey to celibacy will become simpler.

The faster one's breathing is, the shorter the duration of intercourse; the calmer and slower one's breathing is, the more it is prolonged. And the longer intercourse lasts, the more possibility

there is of making sex a door to samadhi, a channel to superconsciousness... The breathing should be very slow. Slowness of breath will open deeper and deeper vistas of realisation.

Another thing to remember during the act of intercourse is that your awareness should be focussed between the eyes, in the seat of the *ajna* chakra. If the attention is focussed there, the duration of the climax can be drawn out—even up to three hours.

After this, who would seek out the one-horned rhino for an aphrodisiac potion or spend a fortune on *Sandoz ka tel* or *tentex forte*? Rajneesh has not just shown us the way to samadhi but has also found out some of the cheapest—and perhaps safest—ways to have a prolonged hard-on, and a belated orgasm! What a relief from those smug, self-assured god-men who point out at every given opportunity that the kingdom of god is only for those who numb their sexual instincts and say goodbye to the pleasures of the flesh!

And three hours for an orgasm! Neither charas nor the finest *Hakimi dawai* can claim such a magical extension for the sex act. No wonder the Bhagwan attracts so many young people from all over the world—particularly the blasé kids from the west who have tried almost everything and now, satiated and world-weary, are in search of new kicks, new experiences to blow their tired minds! Rajneesh has arrived at the right historical moment—just as Isaiah and the prophets before him had predicted!

And so sure is the Bhagwan about his magic formula that, one hears, it is even forced down the throats of hesitant novitiates who enter his ashram. One slightly more inhibited European lass complained in a long letter to the Press some months back that she was forced into a gang bang session, much against her expressed wishes, and found herself taken by some two dozen males in quick succession before she flaked out, either in boredom or in samadhi—she was not quite sure! Her subsequent appeals to the Bhagwan to spare her such beatific pleasures were met with a stolid silence verging on disapproval. The stink her letter created forced the local law enforcing authorities to take more careful precautions that unwilling novitiates are not forced into the arms of the more-than-willing touch-therapists that the Bhagwan hires and recruits from the stud-shows of 42nd Street, off the Avenue of the Americas.

But what the law enforcing authorities have not been able to combat is the atmosphere of permissiveness that the Bhagwan's teachings have inspired—and the sex crime rate at Pune has multiplied several times in the past decade as unwary orange-clad devotees are mugged and raped with unfailing regularity on the streets after dusk. Rajneesh claims that this happens because of sexual

repression in our society. The police claim that some of the less law-abiding citizens of Pune have taken inspiration from the Bhagwan's call for a more open society that free sex and samadhi can bring together in magic symbiosis. Whatever may be the reason, the doors of perception are opening—and without mescaline this time!

What impresses the simple-minded reader most, however, is not Rajneesh's call for a sexual revolution—nor his formulae for an extended hard-on. It is the way the Bhagwan evokes the great waves of love to lap you up and throw you gently on the shores of divine ecstasy. There is an orgasmic quality about this great ecstasy called love that Rajneesh keeps on talking about. It is not the word as we have known it—nor the love that we have shared or experienced in our mundane lives. It works on two distinct levels in the Bhagwan's philosophy—the sexual and the divine—and at a certain point both experiences meet, mingle and become one. That is samadhi. That is what we all must aim for, says this devilishly handsome druid time and again, as he brews the magic potion of love for that little Gaulish village we each nurture in our hearts.

Love is God. Love is the answer to all man's problems. For millions of years man has turned away from love and nurtured hate and jealousy in his heart. He has waged a war against sex and this has cost him a very heavy price. If you are to believe Rajneesh, all you have to do is make love—and all your problems will be solved. Russia will move her troops out of Afghanistan. Oriana Fallaci will jump into the arms of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Sonny and Cher will make up; and so will Christina Onassis and her Russian boyfriend, Sergei of the KGB, whom she briefly married in a moment of stray summer madness. Even the SALT II talks will start again and Muammar Gaddafi will embrace Menachem Begin. Rajesh Khanna's piles, Raj Narain's imbecilities and Rajneesh's own baiding pate, everything will respond to love. For love can cure everything. It can bring opposites and opponents together in one great cheerful finale, in the true tradition of Manmohan Desai.

Rajneesh is convinced that prostitutes and pervers exist in direct proportion to a society's civilisation. The more civilised man pretends to be, the more ugly are the manifestations of his debauched and vituperous mind. Rajneesh recommends, therefore, to the delight of all unemployed architects, that temples like Khajuraho should be built all over the civilised world so that people will know how to emerge from the world of kama and enter that of Rama!

Similarly, he suggests some less expensive remedies. Children should be left in the nude to inspect each other's genitals uninhibitedly so that they have no doubts in their minds,



when they finally grow up, as to who is supposed to do what and to whom! The energy of sex should not be wasted. Man can use sex to great advantage and launch his boat on the high seas of salvation. Such a boat can never sink. No storms can destroy it nor toss it hither and thither. For once sex is realised and then transcended, man can uplift himself to that realm of joyous, truthful consciousness—to *satchidanand* where out of celibacy procreation takes place, where sex is no more the end but the means to an end. Only then will man be on his way to a brave new world of his dreams.

Those who show nude photos, write obscene books and produce sexy films are not responsible for these leakages of energy. The responsibility of these kind of perversions lies with those who have put barriers in the way of our understanding of sex. It is because of these people that naked pictures are in demand, that pornographic books are on sale, that nude films are made, and we see the sordid and absurd results every day... In order to succeed in producing a new man, it is a question of ultimate concern and dire necessity that we accept sex, that we come to know sex fully, that we understand it and that we transcend it.

What more can you ask from your Bhagwan?

I, common mortal, am impressed. There are many things I do not understand. The subtleties of Brechtian theatre and Marxian dialectics. The complexities of the colours that Cezanne used. The crucial need for the iambic pentameter in a world that is beset by the cruelty of Pol Pot and the senseless violence of

Biafra. I do not understand why the world should scream itself hoarse over the few hostages that the Iranian students have taken and yet allow a criminal despot like the Shah of Iran with the blood of thousands on his hands to live a free man. I do not enjoy some of Polanski's most celebrated films, nor do I, honestly, comprehend some of Harold Pinter's best-known plays. The grammar of Martha Graham's dance forms is double Dutch to me and I have never enjoyed, for some strange reason, the game of volleyball.

We all have our quirks, true. But sex is something I understand and enjoy. And the Bhagwan, strange as his ways may seem to most of us, is someone I understand. For his arguments make sense to me. It is true, others have said it before. But it is equally true that few of them have been men of religion. I have lived with guilt and primal sin, and other such equally strange concepts that I have never really understood but have accepted in all good faith, in the hope that they will lead me out of this valley of darkness and of fear.

I now know that there is no salvation. Only the weak and the insecure, the tired and the infirm live with shame. Others, like Rajneesh himself, can have the cake and eat it if only you have the guts to take it in the first place. That is great wisdom—even if it took a small-time philosophy teacher in Saugar University slightly more than a decade to learn it and reap the windfall profits such learning brought in its wake. I have also learnt, from Rajneesh, that the only way to enjoy sex is to take it as it comes. And with practice, the Bhagwan assures me, I can take three long hours to come!

Behind the dissolution

By AJOY BOSE



Zail Singh



Ram Sundar Das

JUST a week after Mrs Indira Gandhi swept in to power with a massive majority and a day after the new Cabinet was formed, the Indira Congress decided that the non-Congress (I) state Governments would have to go. On January 15, a sub-committee of the ruling Party met and it was unanimously decided that in view of the massive majority with which it had won in most states of the country, immediate steps should be taken to instal the ruling Party in as many states as possible. A full working committee meeting later formally endorsed this and set up a sub-committee to go into the various modalities on how this was to be brought about.

Although there was complete unanimity among all members of the Indira Congress about the necessity to bring down the opposition-ruled state Governments, there were differences of opinion on what method should be adopted to achieve this. One group held that the Central

Government should announce immediate dissolution of the state Assemblies since a precedent had already been set by the Janata Party and the Supreme Court had upheld it. Besides the opposition was in a shambles, the Congress (I) was on the crest of a popularity wave and the performance of most of the state Governments was dismal.

But another group strongly advocated defections as the best strategy. An immediate dissolution would be controversial, they argued, and might even unite the opposition Parties. In some states like Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, this could be disastrous since even in the parliamentary elections, the percentage of combined votes polled by the Janata and the Lok Dal was higher than that of the ruling Party.

There was also the ticklish issue of the ratification of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes Reservation Bill which was to be ratified by the state Assemblies. A dissolution would mean holding immediate elections which could pose all sorts of organisational problems.

On the other hand, this group argued, defections would make the transition of power smoother. The example of Karnataka which was captured by the Congress (I) shortly after Mrs Gandhi won, was cited as an example. Defections had already started on a massive scale in almost all the states and this group felt that it would be easy to topple at least seven state Governments within a month.

Both groups said that they had the interests of the Party as a whole in mind but their opinions were dictated essentially by their own equations in different states. The Home Minister, Gyani Zail Singh, for instance was in favour of defections in Punjab since he could then get his own man Mohinder Singh Dhillion installed as the Chief Minister. Holding fresh elections in the state could well mean that other aspirants for power in Punjab, like Darbara Singh, might get the upper hand.

Mrs Gandhi on her part too, was slightly reluctant to go in for an immediate dissolution. She was reportedly of the opinion that the Government should wait for at least a month before it decided to take such an extreme step. The results of the Kerala Assembly elections which followed soon after raised further doubts in Mrs Gandhi's mind. Her maiden venture into state elections after her comeback, met with a re-

sounding defeat and although conditions in the rest of the country were quite different from Kerala, it was a psychological setback for the Congress (I).

Accordingly, defection and not dissolution was thought to be the main instrument to bring down the non-Congress (I) state Governments. The game of defection paid immediate dividends in Haryana where the Chief Minister, himself, along with a long troupe of supporters including some important Ministers, crossed over to the Indira Congress thus handing the state Ministry on a platter to Mrs Gandhi. Encouraged at this, Yashpal Kapoor was sent on a special mission to Orissa to try and work out ways to topple the Government. In Maharashtra, Vasantrao Patil was told to spare no effort to bring down the state ministry. And Gujarat, it was considered, would be no problem at all with the image of the Congress (I) plummeting to a new low there.

By the first week of February, however, it was clear that the game of

defection was not succeeding as quickly as the Haryana toppling operation had led Mrs Gandhi to expect. In Orissa, the Chief Minister, Nilamony Routray, showed a surprising tenacity to cling to power and despite Mr Kapoor's best efforts, the Orissa unit of the Indira Congress could not encourage many defections. In Maharashtra, Vasantrao Patil who could not match Sharad Pawar's political manoeuvrings, failed to persuade the powerful sugar lobby to totally support the Congress (I). Gujarat, of course, was there for the taking, but since the term of that Government was already due to expire within six months, there was little point in toppling it.

The biggest drawback of Mrs Gandhi's plans was the situation in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. These two states of India, comprising nearly one-fourth of the country's population, were naturally the prime target of the new Government. While Mrs Gandhi's success had not been so complete in these two states as in most other states, she was confident that it would not be very difficult to get them to go the Haryana way. This was in view of the fact that in Haryana, the Indira Congress had won fewer votes in the Lok Sabha elections than in UP or Bihar.

But Ram Sundar Das of Bihar and Banarsi Das of Uttar Pradesh just refused to follow Bhajan Lal, in spite of strenuous efforts by the Congress (I). Although the Janata and Lok Dal are extremely hostile in these two states, they united to resist the Congress (I) onslaught. A number of other states which were thought to be easy bait and where the Congress (I) had achieved sweeping successes in the parliamentary elections, also proved hard nuts to crack: The Governments of Punjab, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, although tottering, refused to give in to the Congress (I)'s plan. It became obvious that defection was not succeeding in bringing the whole country under the Indira Congress rule. Dissolution now seemed to be the only way and the Narainpur atrocities gave Mrs Gandhi an ideal opportunity to create an atmosphere which would morally uphold a decision to dissolve at least the Uttar Pradesh Assembly. The Parasbigha and Dohia incidents in Bihar followed close in its wake and statements made by Mrs Gandhi and her Ministers made clear their case on the necessity for the state Governments to be dissolved.

There were, however, some technical problems facing Indira Gandhi's Government before it could take the final step. The first was the Scheduled Castes and Tribes Reservation Amendment Bill which had to be ratified by the state Assemblies. The problem was that if the Assemblies in non-Congress(I) ruled states took their own time in ratifying the Bill, the date for the Rajya Sabha elections would be over. This meant that the opposition Parties would get their members into the Rajya Sabha on the basis of their strength in the states. On the other hand, if Mrs



Yashpal Kapoor

Gandhi dissolved the state Assemblies before they ratified the amendment Bill, the Assembly election would have to be held without reserved seats.

A committee was appointed to go into the various aspects of the problem. In the committee were Home Minister Gyanai Zail Singh, Finance Minister R. Venkataraman, External Affairs Minister Narasimha Rao and Commerce Minister Pranab Mukherjee. On February 16, the Cabinet met informally at 5.30 in the evening and decided to dissolve the nine state assemblies.

While the Cabinet held another meeting around 8.30 at night, word had already gone around the capital that at least some of the Assemblies were going to be dissolved that

night. In fact, around 7.30 in the evening, a senior Tata executive said quite confidently that the Bihar Assembly would be dissolved that night. The second meeting of the Cabinet formally passed the dissolution decision and shortly before midnight President Sanjiva Reddy signed the presidential proclamation. Thus, slightly after a month of the initial decision of the Indira Congress, the life of the nine non-Congress (I) state Assemblies came to an end.

The proclamation, however, gave no reason for the dissolution, probably because of the 1977 Supreme Court judgment which had ruled that no reasons were needed for the dissolution but if they were given, they were open for legal questioning.

EXTRACTS

RECENT history has shown that developing countries like India and Pakistan can best resolve their differences peacefully and bilaterally without any outside intervention. Outside intervention in the past has not only sharpened differences but also made them even more difficult to resolve. When a bilateral problem between two neighbouring developing countries becomes the bone of contention in the Great Power rivalry and the Cold War, the real issues are taken out of their context and unduly magnified.

This has been the sad story of Indo-Pak relations since 1947. A ray of hope appeared after the 1965 con-

flict and the Tashkent Agreement of 1966. However, the strained relations between India and China after the 1962 conflict and China's attempts to support Pakistan against India complicated the situation. It was further compounded by the partisan attitude of America.

During the first part of the Nixon-Kissinger period, 1969-1972, the US tilt against India and towards Pakistan had been operating under the surface through clandestine supply of arms to Pakistan in spite of the US ban. The so-called 'one-time exception' was in fact neither one-time nor an exception. I recall an informal conversation with a senior counsellor of the State Department in

1969 when he bluntly warned me, "the Pakistan Army is far superior to the Indian Army; one Pakistani soldier is equal to ten Indians; the next war between India and Pakistan will result in a Pakistani victory over India and India's dismemberment." I told him politely but firmly that I hoped such a contingency would not arise but if it did, the American assessment be proved wrong.

When I met Henry Kissinger in his Basement Office at the White House in the summer of 1969, he was more diplomatic, cautious and careful than the counsellor. He talked mainly about Vietnam, and expressed his appreciation of India's efforts in helping to find a peaceful solution of the

Will the real Kissinger please stand up?

It is difficult to say who or what the real Kissinger is, says T. N. KAUL, and refers to Kissinger's double-talk on the issue of the Indo-Pak conflict of 1971. Exclusive extracts from his forthcoming book "The Kissinger Years: Indo-American Relations" to be published by Arnold-Heinemann (India) Pvt. Ltd., price Rs 35



Vietnam problem. At that time he had not yet started his flirtations with Peking and spoke strongly against China's attempts to disrupt peace in Indo-China and on the Indian subcontinent. He denied that the US was giving any arms to Pakistan and declared that America had much closer affinity with a democratic even though nonaligned India than with a military dictatorship in Pakistan. He went so far as to express appreciation of the Soviet Union's positive and helpful attitude in the Vietnam confrontation. His main anxiety, at that time, seemed to be that India should not criticise the US policy towards Vietnam in public. This was understandable because American public opinion was very critical of Nixon's Vietnam policy.

I told Kissinger that we would be glad to be of any help in bringing America and Vietnam into direct contact. He showed some interest. But Nixon seemed to be certain that he could force the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to come to terms with the South through military pressure.

It is not my intention to write in great detail about the Vietnam problem and how, in spite of the 'Christmas Carpet Bombing' in December 1972, the Nixon policy in Vietnam failed. I have dealt with this question elsewhere (see *India, China and Indo-China*). My main purpose here is to show how and why the US policy towards India, during this Nixon-Kissinger period, developed from an ostensibly 'neutral' attitude to an open 'tilt'.

Kissinger paid a short visit to Delhi in July 1971. His main thesis was that India and the USA were much closer, as the world's two largest democracies, than any other two countries. We realised, however, that Kissinger was looking at the Indo-Pak question not on its merits but in the wider perspective of America's rivalry with and hostility towards the Soviet Union and the possibility of a *detente* with China. Although he did not give any direct hint of his forthcoming secret pilgrimage to Peking via Pakistan, we had information from sources in Geneva and elsewhere that such a visit was contemplated. G. Parthasarathy had been told about it in Geneva by Edgar Snow and mentioned it to us when he arrived in Delhi.

According to a verbatim record of my conversation with Kissinger, it was evident that he was trying to pull the wool over our eyes, both vis-a-vis Pakistan and China. I am not blaming Kissinger for having kept his Peking visit a secret from us because it was perhaps necessary for him to do so as he was not sure how it would end and partly because he was obliged to Pakistan for arranging it. However, the game was much deeper. It was not because Pakistan had acted as a channel of communication between Washington and Peking that Nixon and Kissinger felt obliged to 'tilt' towards Pakistan. The fact was that in order to start

a *detente* with China, Nixon and Kissinger felt that friendship between India and the US was expendable, while a tilt towards Pakistan would be helpful. American and Chinese policies seemed to converge on these two grounds apart from their common hostility towards the Soviet Union. Any hopes that we might have entertained for improving relations with the USA seemed farfetched and not practical in the circumstances. The US administration subordinated regional problems and interests to its global policy objectives. It became even more anti-Indian with Nixon's decision to seek *detente* with China. Pakistan used this development and exploited the cold war and its military alliances against India.

Independently of this development, we had been in close consultation with Moscow about the desirability of solemnising our already existing friendly relations in the form of an Indo-Soviet treaty. Talks had been going on about this at my and the ambassador's level from 1969 onwards. Such a treaty was in harmony with the national interests of India as well as of the Soviet Union. It was all the more necessary in view of Pakistan's growing collusion with China against India, and the US tilt. But that was not the main purpose of motivation of the treaty. The prime objective was to strengthen relations with a reliable friend such as the

Soviet Union whose reliability had proved in times of need. But this did not debar either country from developing friendly relations with third countries. The treaty was and is a long term arrangement and not something done for tactical reasons. It is valid for twenty years.

When Pakistan started its military terror in East Pakistan from 25 March 1965 onwards, hundreds of thousands of Muslim and non-Muslim refugees from East Pakistan started pouring daily into the adjoining States of India. A grave situation was created. It upset not only the economic, the administrative and the law and order situation in these adjoining States, but also produced grave danger of communal riots in India. The people in the adjoining States of India had widespread sympathy for their suffering brethren of East Bengal; India could not remain unconcerned about the situation. India gave moral, material and political support to the Bangladeshi and pleaded with various Governments, including friends and allies of Pakistan, to persuade President Yahya Khan to bring about a political settlement of the problem with Sheikh Mujib and the already elected leaders of East Pakistan.

Kissinger for once is right when he says that I told the US ambassador in New Delhi, Kenneth Keating, in the middle of March 1971 that "India wanted Pakistan to remain

Kissinger and Y. B. Chavan



united". He forgets, however to add that I also said to Keating that we had no designs on any part of Pakistan but if Pakistan did not find a peaceful political solution, it might erupt into a holocaust that would be difficult to control. Kissinger also omits to mention that after the massacre of East Bengalis by the West Pakistan military forces in Dacca on the night of 25 March 1971 and the arrest of Sheikh Mujib, I warned Keating that unless Mujib was released and Yahya started negotiations with him, the situation would deteriorate and get beyond Pakistan's control. He also does not mention that we repeatedly requested the US to exercise her influence to get Sheikh Mujib released and to persuade Pakistan not to provoke Hindu-Muslim riots or transgress across our borders.

We did not speak about "Pakistan's humiliation perhaps trying to spread the centrifugal tendencies from East to West Pakistan," as Kissinger accuses us of doing; on the contrary, we adopted a very restrained posture and pleaded that the Pakistan Government should guarantee the return of refugees to their homes in East Pakistan with honour and safety. Kissinger goes on to say, "When the United States agreed to assume the major cost of refugee relief India switched to insisting that the refugee problem was insoluble without a political settlement". We did not switch our stand but had been urging from the very beginning that without a political settlement the refugees would not return to East Pakistan because they were afraid of reprisals by the West Pakistani military forces. This stand proved correct when after the liberation of Bangladesh, almost all the refugees numbering 10 million returned to their homes in Bangladesh, because the West Pakistani military forces were not in power to commit further atrocities on them. For an intellectual like Kissinger to brush this valid argument aside and impute ulterior motives to India, is the height of hypocrisy. I wonder how America would have reacted if a similar situation had been created across her borders say, in Canada or in Mexico! If Kissinger thought that the Government and the people of India would be satisfied by American doles of refugee relief, he was underestimating the gravity of the situation and the strong feelings both in India and in Bangladesh, and ignoring the human aspect of the problem.

Not being satisfied with perverting India's stand, Kissinger goes on to say, "In May 1971 we learned from sources heretofore reliable that Mrs Gandhi had ordered plans for a lightning 'Israeli type' attack to take over East Pakistan". I categorically contradict this statement. The fact was that Mrs Gandhi was trying her best for a political solution negotiated directly between Yahya Khan and Sheikh Mujib or their already elected representatives, and not encouraging the Indian Parliament, the

Indian Government or the Indian commanders to embark on a 'lightning Israeli type attack over East Pakistan'. Instead of appreciating India's restraint and correcting the anti-India tilt, Kissinger is only adding insult to injury by his insinuations. American 'sources' have been proved unreliable and incorrect in the past in many parts of the world, and one wonders, whether there was any such a 'heretofore reliable source' or whether one was not invented by Kissinger or the CIA and words put into his mouth to suit the Nixon-Kissinger premise at that time.

According to *the Hindu*, Madras, of November 30, 1979, its correspondent in Washington, N. Ravi, had a telephonic conversation with Tom Powers, author of *The Man Who Kept the Secrets — Richard Helms and the CIA*. Powers told him: "My impression is that it was not a Cabinet Member but somebody with an administrative position in the Cabinet". The impression given by a deliberate leak from the White House in 1971 and Nixon's revelation to David Frost in early 1978 was that the informant was a Minister of the Indian Cabinet. So much for the reliability of Kissinger's sources. We are more concerned about the truth and substance of his allegation. As I have said already, there was absolutely no truth in it. Actually, it was Yahya Khan who embarked on a 'lightning Israeli type attack' on nine airfields in north and west India from his western wing on 3 December 1971 at 6 p.m., not India.

Kissinger lets the cat out of the bag when he says, "On May 28 Nixon sent letters to both Mrs Gandhi and Yahya Khan outlining our policy. The letter to Yahya was not exactly strong: it reflected our need for Yahya as a channel to Peking". Kissinger admits, "I was convinced that East Pakistan would eventually become independent. Our policy was to give the facts time to assert themselves". I doubt whether the first sentence correctly reflected Kissinger's thinking at that time or is merely an afterthought. Be that as it may, Kissinger forgets to mention how much time he thought was necessary 'for the facts to assert themselves'. This was revealed to us during Mrs Gandhi's visit to Washington at the beginning of November 1971. We were told that, in the American view, about two years would be needed for a political peaceful settlement to be brought about. In the mean time, the US administration expected India to accept tens of thousands of refugees from East Bengal daily and remain satisfied and grateful for the food packets and clothing that America was sending to India—to clothe and feed the refugees.

Kissinger gives credit to Yahya for announcing on June 28, 1971 'a plan to transfer political power to civilians'. Kissinger seems to forget that Yahya's plan was no more than appointing a puppet civilian as governor of East Pakistan without conceding the six-point formula for

autonomy as the elected leaders of Bangladesh were demanding. Kissinger's perfect sense of timing, which he displayed with such skill during his shuttle diplomacy and the first Disengagement Agreement in the Egyptian-Israeli conflict of 1973, was completely missing during the Bangladesh crisis. Commenting on this in his column of November 13, 1979 in *The Washington Post*, Jack Anderson has said: "Thus Kissinger, with even smoother obfuscation that Nixon achieved in his memoirs, revives an eight-year-old lie".

Referring to his visit to New Delhi in July 1971, Kissinger admits: "I had two partially contradictory missions. One was to prepare India circumspectly for the news of my visit to China. Noting the ping-pong diplomacy and our two-year record of overtures in trade and travel, I stressed that we were bound to continue to improve our relations with Peking. On the other hand, we would take a grave view of an unprovoked Chinese attack on India. If this unsolicited comment did not utterly mystify my interlocutors, it may have given them a brief moment of encouragement, though that moment of euphoria surely ended with the July 15 announcement of my trip to China". This is a specimen of Kissinger's 'double-dealing, double-talk and double-think'.

Kissinger is being deliberately naive if he means what he says in this statement. We were not so naive as to take Kissinger at his word. We had experience of the past 20 years to go by. We had no illusions about the US administration's benevolence in this matter, even on humanitarian grounds. It is interesting that Kissinger later (after his return from Peking) told our ambassador that if China intervened in the Indo-Pak conflict, America would not be in a position to do anything about it. This is contrary to what he had said to us before his visit to Peking. If his previous statement was made to assuage our feelings, it did not succeed. And if his later statement was meant to frighten us, it did not succeed either. We were not 'mystified' by Kissinger's statement nor taken in by it. He is a suave, clever and cunning diplomat, but it never pays to be that in the long run. Modern diplomacy must have some basis of honesty and sincerity, otherwise it loses all credibility. And 'credibility' was what was lacking in Kissinger's diplomacy.

THIS is perhaps where Kissinger overestimated his ability to fool others and underestimated the perspicacity of others. Kissinger is a phrase-monger. He plays with words as if they were pellets to be fired from an airgun to frighten children or balloons to be floated in the sky to test other people's reaction. He does not understand the mind of Asia and the sensitivities and sensibilities of Asians. He mistook the patience, restraint and perseverance of India as a sign

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Nixon in Delhi

of weakness and decadence. He understands and respects only strength and therefore concedes to the Chinese and the Japanese some measure of 'realism and farsightedness'. But he denies it to the other Asians. I do not wish to psychoanalyse Henry Kissinger. That is a task for people better qualified, but I must point out his deliberate misrepresentation of facts.

He says, "I invited Mrs Gandhi to visit the United States for a fundamental review of Indian American relations with President Nixon. But Mrs Gandhi and her Ministers were in no mood for conciliation. The invitation to Washington was evaded" This is just not true. Mrs Gandhi could naturally not go out of India at that time because of the internal political situation and the external threat. But she did visit Washington, London, Paris, Brussels, Vienna and Bonn in October-November 1971 in view of the deteriorating situation on our borders with East Pakistan, and in her anxiety and hope to be able to persuade the western friends of Pakistan to urge Yahya Khan to release Mujib for a political settlement with her. Instead of appreciating this, Kissinger has only tried to blame Mrs Gandhi and her Ministers. This is characteristic of Super Power behaviour which pseudo-intellectuals like Henry Kissinger suffer from. They feel that the whole world is against them and they are the only ones who are right. The Secretary of State or Pres-

sident. They refused to understand or appreciate the internal and external compulsions in another democratic country like India. They resented statements of facts which may imply aberrations of American policy, e.g., the shipment of arms to Pakistan, in spite of the ban imposed in 1965 which Mrs Gandhi and her Ministers raised with Kissinger during his 1971 Delhi visit.

Kissinger's criticism of the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty signed on August 9, 1971 is quite contrary to what he told me and others later. He calls it "a bombshell about which we first learned from the newspapers". Did he expect India to seek the previous approval of the US administration, or at least inform it before signing the treaty? Did the US administration ever reciprocate in such matters towards India? This reveals Kissinger's real appreciation(?) of India's policy of independence and non-alignment.

Apart from this, Kissinger's assessment of the treaty as given in his book *The White House Years* is rather interesting. It is at complete variance with the assessment he gave me when I was ambassador to the USA from 1973-76, and also during his talks with the Indian Cabinet Ministers during his visit to India in October 1971. He told me then that America not only understood but also appreciated India's policy of non-alignment. America did not mind India's friendship with the

Soviet Union and did not consider that the Indo-Soviet treaty violated or went against India's policy of non-alignment. India, according to him, was not a small country that could be dominated or dictated to by any Great or Super Power, including the USSR. But that was not the real Kissinger speaking to me, or was it?

It is difficult to say who or what the real Kissinger is. He seems to shift his stand, his ground and his premise, from time to time, to suit his point of view in a particular situation. He is a pastmaster at coining new phrases, in putting old discredited ideas in new words which can have more than one meaning, so that he may be able to interpret them according to his convenience in a given situation. One is, therefore, inclined to take what he says with a pinch of salt.

However, one has to take him by what he says about the Soviet-Indian Friendship Treaty in his latest book. He writes, "Its bland provisions could not obscure its strategic significance...the two parties pledged to consult regularly on major international problems affecting both sides". So far so good. One need not quarrel with him on this. No important agreement between two sovereign, independent, friendly countries, neighbours of each other, like India and the USSR, can be without its strategic significance. Nor does non-alignment mean giving up its sovereign right by an independent country to consult other friendly countries on major and important problems affecting both sides. Kissinger goes on to say: "The decisive provision was Article XI, which called on the signatories to refrain from giving assistance to any third country taking part in an armed conflict with the other, and committed each side to consult immediately with a view to taking 'appropriate effective measures' in case either party was attacked or threatened with attack". Surely any sovereign country, including a non-aligned country, has the right to refrain from giving assistance to any third country taking part in an armed conflict with a country friendly to the non-aligned country. Equally, non-alignment does not mean giving up one's sovereign right to consult with another friendly country with a view to taking appropriate effective measures when there is an attack or a threat of attack on either country. Art. IX does not commit India or the Soviet Union to station the troops of one on the soil of the other or have military bases of one on the territory of the other. There is no contradiction between this Article and India's policy of non-alignment. Actually, Article IV, which Kissinger does not care to mention, expresses respect for India's policy of non-alignment as "an important factor in the maintenance of peace and international security and in the lessening of international tensions".

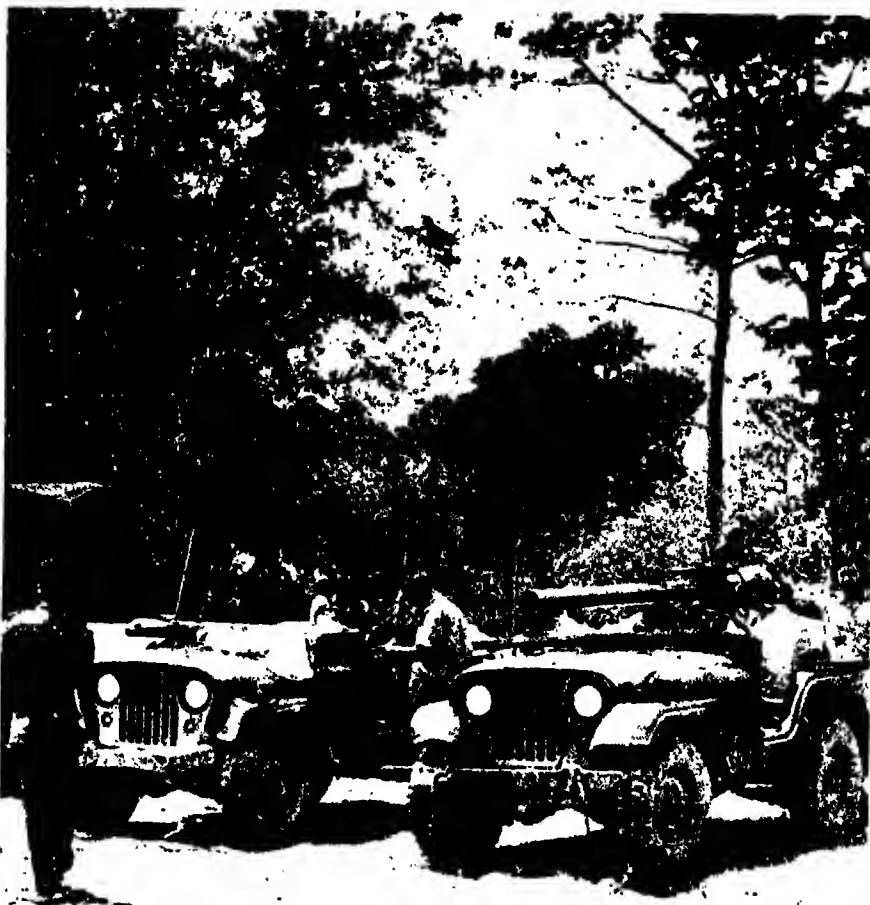
Kissinger's conclusion "that the treaty was deliberately steering nonalignment India towards a

de facto alliance with the Soviet Union" is wide of the mark. On the contrary, Mrs Gandhi was trying to give teeth to India's policy of non-alignment and deter countries who might have designs against India. The treaty was well-timed in view of Pakistan's atrocities in Bangladesh and her open threats against India and China's encouragement of her in this regard. As it turned out, the treaty did deter China and America from direct intervention in the Indo-Pak conflict of 1971. And what was wrong with that? It is strange that Kissinger should draw a conclusion from this that the Soviet-India Friendship Treaty "objectively increased the danger of war, ... with the Treaty Moscow threw a lighted match into a powder keg". Actually the treaty prevented the Indo-Pak conflict from escalating into a Sino-Indian, Sino-Soviet or Soviet-US conflict and localised the two-week war. Strange that Kissinger should speak thus now when he did not utter a word against the treaty previously. It is hardly fair that Kissinger should criticise India and attribute and insinuate motives to her which are not borne out by facts.

However, Kissinger does mention what L. K. Jha had told him about the treaty that it "was not a reaction to American policy in India-Pakistan crisis but a carefully considered Indian strategy that had been in preparation for over a year". Kissinger goes on to say, "I have never understood why Jha would consider this reassuring (Dobrynin made the same point to me). I replied that, read literally, the treaty was a matter of secondary concern, though it was hard to reconcile with India's nonalignment. What did concern us was the possibility that India might draw the conclusion that it now enjoyed freedom of action toward Pakistan ... I wanted him to understand that military intervention in East Pakistan would involve the high probability of a cut off of aid to India".

Far from encouraging India to intervene militarily in East Pakistan, the treaty discouraged China and the USA from openly intervening on the subcontinent. It was the US administration that sent the Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal but dared not land it in India or East Pakistan. India had already sunk a US submarine, Ghazi, given to Pakistan and Soviet submarines were floating under the Seventh Fleet. China made warlike noises but refrained from intervening militarily in the sub-continent.

It was Pakistan that started the war against India and not vice versa. Kissinger conveniently forgets this. According to him, "I warned once more against trying to settle the issue by war, an evolutionary process would with our support lead to self-determination for East Bengal ...". This only insults the intelligence of Indians and Bangladeshis whom Kissinger and Nixon expected perhaps to wait until their support to the so-called 'evolutionary process' would lead to 'self-determination' in



Vehicles of the Indian Army in a jungle clearing

East Bengal. Whatever that phrase may mean to Kissinger, he reveals the real motivation when he says, "Nixon thought that Pakistan was turning into a surrogate for Vietnam, which was being made irrelevant by the opening to China".

Kissinger completely ignores the fact that Pakistan had deliberately provoked border incidents by firing across the Hilli Salient in East Pakistan into the adjoining States of India since November 21. He also conveniently forgets to mention that Pakistani fighter planes had violated our airspace and were brought down on our territory adjoining East Pakistan. He does not seem to realise that Yahya Khan was so desperate at his inability to control the situation in East Pakistan that he wanted to divert world attention from the freedom struggle in East Bengal by provoking India and converting it into an Indo-Pak conflict. What is more, Yahya Khan's military forces in East Pakistan deliberately desecrated Hindu shrines and temples and made the non-Muslims the special targets of their atrocities. They did this in the hope that they could involve the Muslim population of East Pakistan against the non-Muslims and divert their attention from the freedom struggle. They had also hoped that there would be repercussions in India and communal forces would be let loose and lead to Hindu-Muslim riots there. However, Yahya Khan and his colleagues had underestimated the strength

of the freedom struggle in Bangladesh as well as the high morale of the Indian people. Neither of the two things happened and Yahya Khan then let loose his forces against the Muslim population of East Pakistan who were united in their struggle against West Pakistani military forces in Bangladesh.

Kissinger tries to hide the failure of Nixon's policy on the sub-continent thus: "Both Nixon and I had recognised for months that its (East Pakistan's) independence was inevitable; war was not necessary to accomplish it. We strove to preserve West Pakistan as an independent state, since we judged India's real aim was to encompass its disintegration. We sought to prevent a demonstration that Soviet arms and diplomatic support were inevitably decisive in crises. On December 4, I told Nixon that precisely because we were retreating from Vietnam we could not permit the impression to be created that all issues could be settled by naked force...As I told Nixon on December 5, we had to become sufficiently threatening to discourage similar moves by Soviet friends in other areas, especially the Middle East. And if we acted with enough daring, we might stop the Indian onslaught before it engulfed and shattered West Pakistan." By West Pakistan, Kissinger means not only West Pakistan but also Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK) which is legally Indian territory. India could have justifiably r-

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covered most, if not all, the POK territory which belonged to her but refrained from doing so because it would have meant prolongation of the war and more casualties. Also it might have led to the disintegration of the Western Wing of Pakistan where fissiparous trends were already evident in the North-West Frontier Province, Baluchistan and Sind. India did not want instability and upheaval on her doorstep.

As Kissinger admits: "The issue hinged on the geopolitical perspective of the White House as against the regional perspective of the State Department, and on the relative weight to be given to China and India in the conduct of our foreign policy". This then is the truth which percolates through the voluminous book of Henry Kissinger—*White House Years*. Kissinger also refers to the massive vote of 104 to 11 in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on December 7 and calls it a moral victory. This is ironical when the US has violated and defied many resolutions of the General Assembly since the beginning of the UN. However, the UNGA vote was not an expression of opinion on the rights or wrongs of the conflict but called for an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of forces.

I was with the Foreign Minister, Swaran Singh, at the UN two days after this vote. We met over 100 heads of delegations. Most of them belonged to the non-aligned, developing world. They admitted to us that they were convinced of the fault of Yahya Khan and expressed the hope that India would win the war speedily and thereby save them from the embarrassment of expressing another opinion. And some of them were allies of Pakistan. The attitude of Britain and France in the Security Council was that of an honest broker and they refused to take sides. The USSR and Yugoslavia supported us. China and the USA opposed us.

HOWEVER, the issue had already been resolved by events on the ground. The only contribution that Kissinger made was to prolong the conflict by one more week by suggesting to Yahya Khan not to accept the recommendation of his military commander in East Pakistan to lay down arms on December 10. Kissinger advised the Pakistani Ambassador, Raza; "Ceasefire must include 'both' East and West Pakistan, otherwise, the danger to the West would mount as operations in Bengal conclude. Islamabad, therefore, pulled back its proposal for ceasefire in East Pakistan temporarily."

Kissinger met Huang Hua for the second time in the CIA's walk-up apartment in the East Seventies in New York City; "I told him of our reliable information of Indian plans to destroy West Pakistan's armed forces...We were doing our part by moving a carrier task force near the Straits of Malacca." Kissinger



Nixon on arrival in India

should have added "and expected China to do its part also". According to Kissinger, Huang Hua said: "He would inform Premier Chou En-lai of our views; he could tell me now, he added, that China would never stop fighting as long as it had a rifle in its armory; it would surely increase its assistance to Pakistan. I took this—as it turned out, wrongly—to be an indication that China might intervene militarily even at this late stage." Dear Henry, there was a hole in your bucket which you had not noticed!

Kissinger tries to justify the American actions and attitudes on this basis: "A report reached us from a source whose reliability we had never had any reason to doubt and which I do not question today to the effect that Prime Minister Gandhi was determined to reduce even West Pakistan to impotence...Indian forces would proceed with the 'liberation' of the southern part of Azad Kashmir—Pakistani part of Kashmir—and continue fighting until the Pakistani army and air force were wiped out. In other words, West Pakistan was to be dismembered and rendered defenceless." Kissinger has not revealed the source of this report. It is not certain that one existed nor is it certain that Kissinger's intelligence did not put words into the mouth of this supposed source.

If India had wanted to do so, it could have recovered most of POK and over-run West Pakistan. But India was not so foolish as to entertain such a plan. I recall when Mrs Gandhi was addressing the National Press Club in Washington DC in November 1971, I passed on a piece of paper to her suggesting that she might mention that India had no designs on West Pakistani territory. She read it out to the audience and said: "Not only has India no designs on West Pakistani territory but none on East Bengal either." However, if Kissinger still wishes to believe his source, he is welcome to do so. This is not the first time that Kissinger has been in a minority of one or two even in his own country.

Future historians will be able to assess the role of Kissinger and the success or failure of his and Nixon's policy towards the sub-continent

particularly during those crucial years, 1969-72. He asserts: "What made the crisis so different was that the stakes were so much greater than the common perception of them. The issue burst upon us while Pakistan was our only channel to China; we had no other means of communication with Peking. A major American initiative of fundamental importance to the global balance of power could not have survived if we colluded with the Soviet Union in the public humiliation of China's friend—and our ally." What a confession! What a perception of the state of world affairs! What cynicism and cold-blooded calculation! What a narrow interpretation of the national interests and the role of US policy! No further comments are necessary.

Relations between countries like America and India must not depend on the personal likes and dislikes of individuals who happen to occupy positions of power in either country. The stakes involved are too great for both countries as well as for peace in Asia and the world. Both countries need to review their policies and attitudes to respect the vital national interests of each other, and harmonise them with the vital interests of peace and progress in Asia and the world.

India has established durable friendly relations with the USSR. The USSR is also keen to establish normal relations with the USA. China's policy in Asia at the moment is a stumbling block to the further consolidation of *detente* and cooperation between America, the USSR and Asia. But things are changing even in China. It is possible, though not immediately probable, that China will also change her policies towards her neighbours and see the advantages of peaceful co-existence and cooperation and the disadvantages of conflict and confrontation. But this will take time. In the meanwhile, an understanding of each other's positions, national interests and policies between the USA and the USSR and countries like India is necessary in order to prevent the forces of war dominating the forces of peace. Where Nixon and Kissinger failed, others can and must succeed. ■

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SPORTS

"I was learning till a very late age"

MIKE BREARLEY tells HARESH MUNWANI
in an exclusive interview

THE England captain was lounging around in a pair of pyjamas when I walked into his room. He took his time about changing into a blue shirt, explaining "I like these Indian pyjamas because they are so very comfortable, I wear them the whole time at home".

As it happens, pyjamas are not the only things Brearley likes about India. As a matter of fact, he could even pass off as an Indian with that beard of his. A number of people remarked that his features — those that were not obscured by the beard — did look Indian. And yes, with the occasional strand of grey hair here and there, he does tend to look like a sage. Brearley's watchword is casualness, both in manner and in conversation, although he can be abrupt and impatient at times. He is a deep thinker when it comes to the game of cricket, but he accepts the fact that he is not a natural cricketer.

"I played my first big game at the age of 10. Though I got only 5 not out I felt great pride because I was playing with the big boys," Brearley says about his introduction to the game. "In 1960 I joined Cambridge University and played as a wicket keeper, coming in at number eight. In a game against Surrey—a side which had luminaries like Peter May, Ken Barrington, Tony Lock, Peter Loader and Edrich — I got 72 and that gave me a great boost. I was dropped at 14 by Lock of all people. But the lesson I learnt in that game was when I saw Ken Barrington bat. At that time Ken was a certainty in the English side but here he was trying so hard to do well. It was hard going all the way. He was fighting, and struggling to survive. Seeing him bat I got the distinct impression that there was not too much difference between those who played Tests and those who didn't. With this message drilled into my mind I was encouraged.



Mukesh Parpan



Mukesh Parpan

I found I could entertain aspirations to play for England. Mind you, if you see Gary Sobers bat you know there is a great deal of difference between him and you. So if you judge entry into a Test team by Gary's performances, naturally you'll be found wanting."

"I joined Middlesex County in 1964 and I was selected to tour South Africa with the England side. I didn't do well in the initial games and this sort of broke my confidence. Because of my poor form I didn't play too many games and generally felt all alone. I was not involved with the touring party and I also felt that I was not being encouraged. The other reserves in the touring party felt the same way. Ever since I became captain I have always taken great pains to make sure that those who are among the reserves are made to feel a part of the team. I have always designated duties so that these reserves felt involved. When you are far from home and aren't getting runs it can be pretty miserable. I give them every opportunity to play in the smaller games."

"Anyway, going back to the South African tour, my confidence was sapped. I lost faith in my ability and this can be very crucial. The failures on the tour continued to haunt me in the next English season. I was such a miserable flop that I didn't play for the following five years. I took the civil service but had no desire to pursue it. So I settled for academics, doing my post-graduate studies. I did research in philosophy and spent some time in America as well as at Cambridge University before settling for a teaching job at Newcastle University."

"But let me tell you about a flaw in my batting technique which was detected in South Africa. M. J. K. Smith, with the help of a photograph of me playing a forward defensive shot, showed me how much my right foot had moved back and outside the leg stump. That is, instead of my bat facing towards mid-off, it was facing the covers and I tried to rectify my fault. But, as normally happens, when you try and correct one flaw, you develop other faults in your basic technique. So sometimes it's better if you don't try and change a thing too much. I know these things can be explained so easily by actions while mere words don't convey much. As I was saying, my right leg instinctively moved back and across the leg stump while the ideal thing was that my eyes should have been in line with the direction of the ball. The result was that I kept playing across and getting out. I consciously tried to eradicate this by keeping my eyes over the ball but what invariably happened was that I lost my balance. With my head bent, it became difficult to stand erect. My body equilibrium became topsy-turvy. I kept getting entangled and was often a picture of clumsiness at the crease."

"That's why when I became skipper I never criticised my players too

much. I was very careful not to say the same thing repeatedly. I didn't want to be a nag. I didn't want to say a lot or ask the player to radically change his technique. Because I had experienced a horrid time I didn't want them to be subjected to this mind-boggling experience."



THE same thing happened to Derek Randall. Now you see Derek has always got runs in Australia. This season when we were in Australia he started the tour by getting 97. He was getting good scores so I suggested that he open the innings. He also agreed. Randall has a strange shuffle while he's batting. It is predominant and because of this he was able to play many unorthodox but effective shots. Everyone started talking about this shuffle. We played a match and in the first innings Derek played his normal game. At about this time I think he became extremely conscious of his shuffle and decided to erase it. I can't tell you how he changed. He was such a funny bat to watch. Thomson was bowling to him and though there was a little bounce in the wicket, I thought Derek was in a shambles. He played from the leg to the off. All his problems were exaggerated. After that Derek was never the same. He lost most of his attacking shots. He lost confidence. The brilliant Randall had transformed into such a dull player. The process of adjustment had proved difficult and dangerous. In fact Derek was left with bigger problems.

Nikhil Bhatti



Mukesh Parpani

Underwood, Bairstow, Botham, Lever, Gooch, Gower, Emburey, Larkins, Stevenson,



That's why I am not in favour of changing the technique of younger players."

Brearley went back to his earlier story and said "I was picked for the under-25 side to Pakistan and had a unbelievably good tour. I averaged 132. It has been my best performance and admittedly to date I have never quite done the same thing. My earlier flaw didn't show up in Pakistan primarily because the wickets are slow and the bounce is not much."

"Things were going quite well for me. In 1971, Middlesex offered me captaincy. The county had been going through lean years. Fred Titmus and Peter Parfitt tried but they didn't make much headway as skipers. I took up the job because I thought it was attractive. I saw it as a challenge."

Brearley does not agree with the theory that every player wants to be a captain, irrespective of whether he can lead a side or not. "I can name a few players in the present England squad who would prefer not to be captain, and who would rather be left to do their own respective jobs on the field. Of course, I am only guessing when I name Derek Underwood, Bob Taylor, Derek Randall, John Lever, Wayne Larkins, Peter Willey and Graham Dilley. I just might be wrong in my estimation of them."

Does the fact that he is a onetime philosophy don help him in his role as a captain? Brearley was quick to field that one. "No, not particularly. You see, a captain's main job is to get along with his players. Either

he can or he cannot. Philosophy has nothing to do with it. I think I was born with this quality. You know, a survey was conducted in Australia by an independent agency and it was found that I communicated effectively with my eyes and my sense of touch."

"I am one of those people who like his energy flowing. Though I learnt a lot from philosophy, I thought it was all theory by itself. I was interested in it and now I am glad I did it because I think it suited me. But I also like to be involved in practice as well. I do not like theory on its own. I like to see my thoughts executed."



It jars when people refer to me as an intellectual. I find that most of these so-called intellectuals know nothing about the subject when it comes to theory, yet on the other hand they know everything when it comes to dealing with people. They know what should be done but they are not sure how to do it. It is a popular belief that an intellectual will make a good captain, but this is wrong. I think one of the best captains I have ever come across is Keith Fletcher. Now Keith left school at the age of 15. He has no claims whatever to being an intellectual, yet he makes an intelligent captain."

"What I am trying to say is that a captain must be able to face contradiction. He must have the power to make a decision. It is the practical side of captaincy that fascinates me."

How did he develop this quality? Brearley answered: "Once I was a nursing assistant and I found that a great deal of importance was being attached to a person's views. It did not matter whether the person was experienced or not. Position meant nothing. If a person had an idea he was given a hearing. I held no important position yet they always listened to my suggestions. It did not matter whether or not they accepted what you said. The important thing was that your point was heard. I found that if you develop this knack of persuasion, you will get people to do things your way. When you are controlling a group of people it is important to make everyone feel like part of a team. If you don't do that then people get the impression that they are not wanted. It's important to tell them what you have in mind, how you are going to do it, and invite their suggestions and opinions."

Isn't it possible that when you control ten people, an unintentional bias sets in? Brearley thinks for a moment. "It's like having a lot of children. A father would naturally like one child slightly more than the others, although at the same time he would not love any of the others less. I think a captain's job is to successfully camouflage his likes and dislikes. You have to handle ten players individually. You have to achieve the right blend."

Talking about his Test debut, Brearley said "I batted well against

the 1976 West Indies team and I was selected for the first two Tests at the ripe old age of 34, although I was dropped thereafter. The only consolation that year was that Middlesex won the county championship. I made a late debut but I was learning till a very late age. I took a lot of time to learn unlike let's say Geoff Boycott who picked up everything at a very young age and who, over the years, has improved his batting technique. I was a slow learner and all those were crucial years."

But the biggest surprise was when I was named vice-captain to Tony Greig on our tour of India. Not in the side in the previous Tests and vice-captain in the next; that was life. I learnt a lot from Greig as skipper. I got used to playing Tests. I picked up from Tony how to handle the bowling, set fields, how to maintain the pressure. And most important, to emphasise to your players to persist in their strategy, and not to waver even once."

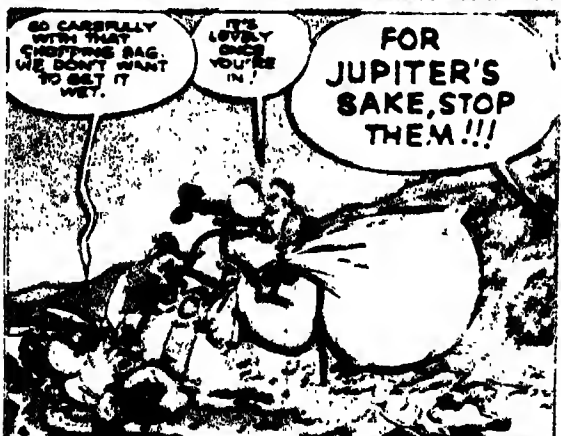
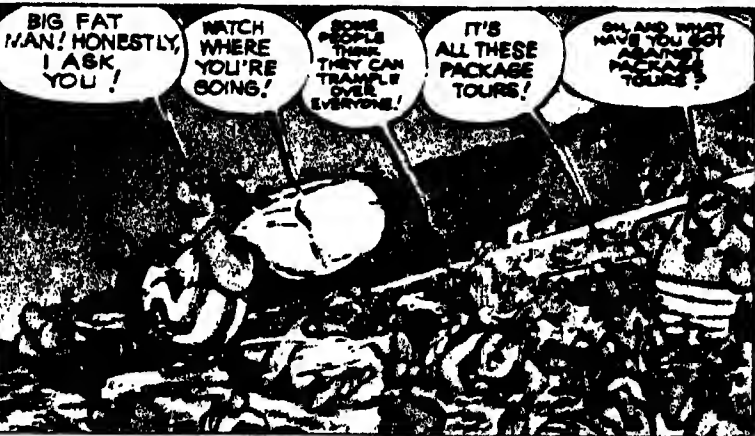
Coming back to the recent trip to Australia, how does he explain England's eclipse in the Test matches? Was Australia a better side now than it was last year because of the inclusion of the Packerites? "I wouldn't say they were a better side. I think we were a worse side than we were last year when we won the series" Brearley says. "The batting failures of Gower and Randall were onset by the success of Gooch, Boycott and myself. It was the bowling and the fielding that let us down. Mike Hendrick, our most accurate bowler, and Geoff Miller had to return home midway through the tour because of injuries. Willis was never the same bowler that he was last year. That left us with Botham. Our fielding close to the wicket was tardy. Taylor our wicket-keeper was not consistent. Hendrick at first slip was missing and so were Miller and Phil Edmunds in the gully and point region. With the result that we had to bring new, inexperienced players in those positions. By keeping Gower and Randall in the slips our fielding in the deep suffered."

What fascinates him about India? Brearley said: "To a Westerner, or a European as you like to call us, either India can be a repulsive and strange country or it can be attractive. I am impressed by the strong family bonds. People go about their tasks in a relaxed way. People are openly curious when you walk through the streets. Before I was never recognised, now I am." He quickly corrects himself. "Sometimes some people would. Indians are warm and open-hearted. They are hospitable and make easy conversation. Calcutta may be a hellish city, but the people I met were energetic and exciting. In a particular way it was stimulating to be in Calcutta with all its noise, and the populous setting. But I'll be honest. Everything about India is not good. Here it's very important to know the right people. The filth, the squalor, the poverty: it makes me miserable."

Boycott, Taylor and Brearley







Who will police the police?

THE ex-Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mr Banarsi Das, had decided rather belatedly to ask a High Court Judge to inquire into the outrages at Narainpur. So, we will have one more report to add to the growing literature on the misbehaviour of the custodians of law and order. But has the citizen any legal remedy against such conduct? Can there be no institutional checks against its repetition? The report will provide as much or as little consolation to the victims as did the Ismail, Mukhtadar Iyer and Shah Reports. Together they reveal a depressing pattern.

Mr Justice M. M. Ismail inquired into the incidents in the Central Prison, Madras between February 1976 to February 1977 when DMK detainees were mercilessly beaten up in the prison by its officials. "I am definitely of the opinion that the jail officials had a regular policy of beating every political detainee, at the earliest possible opportunity, on their admission and that such beatings had been severe and merciless," the Judge remarked.

The report of Mr Justice Viswanatha Iyer of the Kerala High Court found that Mr Vijayan Nair was taken into custody on March 5, 1976 in Trivandrum by a police party. "He was inhumanly tortured while at the Crime Branch Office from the time he was taken to that office on the 5th evening and as a result of the torture inflicted on him on the 5th, 6th and subsequent two days he succumbed to it."

A criminal case was registered, but the Commission found that the accused police officers "have the copy of proceedings of the identification parade conducted by the magistrate. They have the copy of the statements recorded under Section 164 and every movement of the investigation is closely watched by these officers and that is very much against a proper investigation."

Mr Justice Mukhtadar of the Andhra Pradesh High Court inquired into the notorious Rameeza Bee incident in Hyderabad of March 29, 1978. She was beaten up and raped by a Sub-Inspector and two constables and her husband died as a result of the beating he received from the police. To cover up its misdeeds the police branded her a prostitute and brought confessed pimps and prostitutes as its witnesses.

Perjury and fabrication of re-

Civil Liberties

By A.G NOORANI



cords by the police have ceased to shock. What is worse, the Ismail and Mukhtadar Reports found medical practitioners prostituting themselves to help the police in their nefarious deeds.

The Mukhtadar Commission found that Dr P. P. Khandlikar, Professor of Forensic Medicine, Osmania Medical College, "has stooped down to the lowest depths at the zenith of his career by making interpolations in the original reports in order to minimise the seriousness of the injuries with a view to show, in the case of the deceased, that the death was due to natural cause of coronary thrombosis and in the case of Rameeza Bee, that no rape was committed on her"

All these pale into insignificance when compared to Narainpur. Madras, Trivandrum and Hyderabad are state capitals. If the police and jail officials could behave the way they did there, one can well imagine the liberties they would take in a sleepy village. The details of alleged mass rape, looting and brutal beating up of the villagers in Narainpur need not be recounted here. But if our legal system is to have the slightest relevance to the lives of our people, most of whom are poor and dwell in villages, it must devise effective checks against police misconduct.

How is the police to be policed? The National Police Commission

headed by Mr Dharma Vira has in a recent report suggested summary punishment of delinquent police personnel without being swayed by political influence. A counsel of perfection. It expresses the view that policemen are increasingly getting corrupt because of political influence. If they did a lot of unfair things to please their political bosses, why would they not do the same things for themselves. Experience shows that in many parts of the country the police have come to acquire virtual immunity from punishment for crime.

IT was revealed in January that there were 245 deaths in police custody in Britain between 1970 and 1979. On January 25, 1980 the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee decided to inquire into the matter. But in the wake of the disclosure there were certain comments made by Mr Alexander Lyon, Labour M.P. which are very relevant to our situation too. "Would we recognise that the concern of people is not the individual details of individual deaths but whether the system as a whole needs some looking at?" he asked the Home Secretary. In his view the police would not have behaved the way it did if the system had made them more accountable to the public. The Police Act, 1976 set up a Police Complaints Board on which for the first time independent persons are nominated but it has been none too successful.

What remedy has the Indian citizen against a policeman who misbehaves towards him? A civil suit for damages with all the procedural requirements of a notice and heavy court fees or a criminal prosecution with the hurdle of Government's sanction. In some cases the sanction can be avoided. But imagine the citizen's predicament in the face of congestion in courts and the problem of proof. Policemen will back policemen, as we know by now.

Lord Denning said of the writs that they are as antiquated as the pick and the shovel. In the face of police misbehaviour so, is the suit and the prosecution in the forms they exist today especially when there is a collective outrage as in Narainpur. Some independent institutional check outside the police establishment must be devised. It is a challenge to the legal system which it can ignore only at its own peril.

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The man behind Mr Walker

Lee Falk talks on the Phantom

WHEN we met Lee Falk (in the cool shade of the poolside at the Taj) he had at first sight adhered to the fundamental law of a comic hero: never show your eyes. With impenetrable shades sticking to a large pair of spectacles, the creator of the world's first-ever masked comic hero, the magnificent Phantom, Falk characterised the first of a series of continuing laws that have been and always will be abided by his hero. The phantom is the man of the jungle—the neutral arbiter of all jungle disputes (in other words the enduring battle between the Wambesi and Llongo), the man who understands jungle law, and fights crime, injustice and inequality according to that law. Even as his values remain unchanged, those of his antagonists remain unwavering: the high-road of romantic crime as any comic reader understands.

And yet the Phantom has changed, claims Falk. "Where at one time he was the Lord of the Jungle he is now no more than friend of the people. He does not fight to show his might—he fights to uphold the values he stands for. Unlike the past, today the Phantom's intervention is only as a final resort—and it does not indicate inferiority in the natives. Today he is not the distant, mysterious figure that has discovered the secret of perpetual youth. He is more human than he has ever been".

The Phantom—in comic strip or book form—sells each story to an estimated 100 million buyers all over the world. It means a staggering readership of 700 to 800 million. "More than the population of India," points out Falk. Being the first of its kind, and yet largest selling comic ever, considerable erudition has gone into assessing the immense effect a comic-hero like that could have on his audience. Racism has been one of the more enduring stigmas Falk has had to bear up with; political propaganda for the American foreign policies; a decadent romanticism emerging from a long-dead colonial system. "When people have gone into such considerable detail to back up their many theories that something like, say, the Phantom is used as an instrument of propaganda for the American foreign policy, I can only reply that it wasn't intentional. I personally have seldom been an avid supporter of America's policy—Vietnam for instance, though it never



Lee Falk

featured in the comics directly. I have actively opposed—but if you can read conclusions into the Phantom and say that he defends it, you have a right to your conclusion. If you back it up in fact, I shall have to agree".

It was in fact during the Second World War that Falk realised that the Phantom was achieving dimensions larger than the ones he had intended—those of cheap and good-quality literature for children. "There was an underground counter-revolutionary movement recently in a country—I won't tell you which—that the members named the Phantom. But during the war when the Germans had invaded Norway and were on the borders of Sweden, they were carrying out propaganda about how Washington has been bombed, and how New York had been bombed. Now the idea was to establish counter propaganda, so unknown to us thousands of Phantom comics were smuggled into Norway and secretly distributed there. The Germans naturally saw nothing in them, but the fact that they existed and were still being printed meant that things couldn't be so bad out there. That helped morale".

"The late Forties and Fifties were in fact the point of change. It was the sort of change that was reflected in Bangalla (or Denkali to the uninitiated) when the watering holes for the animals were converted into swimming pools for country clubs. Large towns sprang up at the edge of the jungle, the entire country began getting urbanised. A man like President Luaga—who is the new

president, and was formerly a UN volunteer with Diana Palmer—is a progressive thinker who can be seen in contrast with General Bababu. Bababu is a sort of Idi Amin type of dictator, a man who belongs to the past. The Phantom, as I told you, also changed—a sort of United Nations within the jungle. He has helped Luaga, and two presidents have attended his marriage to Diana. His field has got wider, if you can see my point".

A direct lift from real situations is a rare thing in the comic world, which almost by definition depends on the impossible, the infeasible. However, one character—Dr Axel, the man who sets up his hospital in the jungle—has been inspired by Albert Schweitzer. "It happens only very rarely", says Falk, "but here it was so. The man who goes to the jungle with certain principles... such a character is rare in comics. I haven't tried to build up his character to very much more than the practical fact of his being the only scientific medical man in the woods—and, of course, his constant presence whenever the Phantom needs help".

Is the Phantom racist? "Well..." Falk hesitates. He can obviously not deny it. "I suppose if you tried to, you could build up a case to say that he is. I can only say for myself that I am a white man and I have created my heroes the way I am. If I were an Indian, I would naturally have had an Indian hero. The point, I comfort myself with, is the fact that both the series, Phantom and Mandrake, have a very wide readership among the Negroes of America. In the US, people are very sensitive to the question of racism, and if they did think it to be racist they would have started a movement against it. Since it is acceptable to them I see no reason why anyone should not accept it. I feel strongly about the question, and I would not consciously feature it." But surely, he could not imagine a black Phantom? "Why not? It could happen."

The essence of the Phantom myth is what one can call the tradition of jungle lore. Falk recalls being tremendously impressed with Kipling when as a 19-year-old student at Milwaukee he started the Phantom. "The Phantom is a hero—in the most traditional sense of heroism in literature. I was influenced by Robin Hood, the knights of the Round Table, all the heroes of antiquity. Tarzan had preceded the Phantom. I was influenced by Tarzan. The jungle was like the last frontier for me, possibly for many in my generation. Today it is no longer so. Sci-Fi has positively replaced that".

Science Fiction only once entered the Phantom, when Old Man Moz, the story-teller recounts "horned men entering the world" and the Phantom actually does battle with invis-

ible men on board their flying saucer with the help of Devil, his dog. "I have always tried to keep the Phantom pretty current, which is perhaps one of the reasons for its enduring popularity. The sci-fi was actually a joke, but I think it does show that the era of human heroes has definitely given way to more and more incredible beings with these powers of stretch or fly or run or what have you. The Phantom was the first masked hero ever—two years before the Superman and two years before Batman. But I think that the era he has always represented has once for all come to a close".

It is also an era that has emerged with sci-fi cinema. Says Falk: "Flash Gordon is being filmed right now in America in what will possibly be the most expensive picture of its time. You can see the comic-book influence on many of the American sci-fi films — I think that for the first time it

has been comics that have influenced the cinema, and not the other way. Both the Phantom and Mandrake have been filmed, but they were very bad, I thought. At one time I wanted to get David Niven to play Mandrake, but nothing came of it. But they will be filmed in the next few years, in actual and animation."

So the legend lives on. The Phantom turns urbanised in many of his habits—he wants to have Diana in the city for her delivery, perhaps for the first time when a Phantom does not trust jungle midwifery—but realises that he belongs to the jungle. Change is, however, more devious—who knows but Falk could be right: future generations could see a black Phantom. Surely comics are not so sterile as to stay away from the backlash of a literary counterculture.

ASHISH RAJADHYAKSHA,
Bombay

A jilted generation

There is no refuge for the Tibetans



The Dalai Lama in USA

FOR 4,000 Tibetan refugees in Bhutan, the picture-postcard kingdom wedged between India and China-occupied Tibet, things seem to have reached a point of no return. "Unless a miracle takes place, they would be forced to return to China-occupied Tibet", says an insider of the Dalai Lama's headquarters in Dharamsala. They have refused to abandon their status as Tibetan refugees, and ignored offers of Bhutanese citizenship. The National Assembly of Bhutan therefore has decided to send them back

to the country they fled from—China-occupied Tibet. Before that however, the Bhutanese Government had sent feelers to eight nations (Canada, Holland, New Zealand, Australia, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway and Austria) to accept the 4,000 refugees which went unheeded.

Now the Bhutanese Government has decided to put into practical shape its plan to deport the Tibetans since the Government of India has also declined to accept them. New Delhi says that it still has too many refugees for settlement out of

the original 60,000 (now 80,000) who took refuge in India in 1959 and, therefore, cannot afford to accept more. According to latest intelligence reports from Thimpu (the Bhutanese capital), the Bhutanese have already uprooted 92 Tibetans and sent them to "restricted areas". Notices have also been served on 900 more to be prepared to move to other remote areas of the Himalayan kingdom at a short notice. The "restricted areas" are close to the Bhutan-Tibet border, and cut off from the rest of civilisation. "Faced with two harsh realities: the Bhutanese Government and the barren areas to which they have been shifted," says a source, "it won't be long before the refugees are forced to choose between the two." Intelligence reports mention that the Bhutanese Government has taken photographs of all the refugees in the Kingdom and issued them numbered plates to be hung round their necks.

"They are being treated worse than cattle," says 26-year-old Tenzing, a Tibetan youth. "Where is the world's conscience or human rights?" Lobsang, another Tibetan youth says: "Bhutan is a member of the United Nations. If it doesn't want these refugees, it should ask the UN to make arrangements for their settlement elsewhere." Right now, the Bhutanese are keeping their plans of deporting the Tibetans, a secret. But already panic has seized those in the kingdom. Recently a family of refugees from Bhutan smuggled themselves into India by paying a large sum to a truck driver operating between India and Bhutan. Unfortunately, they were detected at Sonada (Darjeeling) by the Indian police and were taken to be deported back into Bhutan. About 150 Tibetan refugees from India intervened and prevented them.

Later, when the family of eight refugees were taken into police custody and a case for illegal entry into India registered against them, the head of the family told a friend: "If there is no hope (of being allowed to stay in India), I'll kill all members of my family first and then commit suicide right here in India". Apart from the eight Tibetan refugees, another group of four women have crossed into India from Bhutan and were noticed at Tawang, in the Indian State of Arunachal Pradesh. They have also been charged with illegal entry into India. According to latest reports the 12 refugees have now been allowed to stay in India temporarily by the Indian Government as a very special case but this does not necessarily mean a change in New Delhi's stand.

The Tibetan refugees in Bhutan were once favoured by the late King of Bhutan, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk. The Tibetan refugees had acquired land-holdings (despite their status as refugees) and enjoyed many privileges and most Tibetans became prosperous. This state of affairs suddenly changed in 1974, just two years

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after the death of the king. Just before the coronation of the present king of Bhutan, Jigme Singhye Wangchuk, 28 Tibetan refugees were suddenly arrested for having conspired to assassinate the would-be king. "Over five years have passed and the Bhutanese haven't produced those arrested in court, much less them guilty", says 28-year-old Dhondoo, whose relatives are in Bhutan. "No country in the world seems to bother about the Tibetan refugees in Bhutan whose human rights are being trampled by Bhutan", says an embittered Tibetan youth. "Even Amnesty International doesn't bother about them". Refugee sources say that during the last five years, Tibetan refugees have been arrested, beaten and publicly humiliated. "They've suffered in silence", says Tashi, an old Tibetan.

Dharamsala circles see a Chinese hand behind Bhutan in order to scuttle the Tibetan struggle for resistance. They also fear that the Bhutanese move may set the precedent for Nepal, where over 10,000 refugees are settled. Bhutan has refused to have anything to do with the Dalai Lama's administration. The Dalai Lama, however, has sent an appeal to the king of Bhutan to reconsider his decision to repatriate the Tibetans. The appeal also says that if the king is not willing to change his mind he should at least

defer the movement of refugees for a couple of months to enable the Dalai Lama to find alternative arrangements.

During the Dalai Lama's trip to USA in October 1979, Tibetans settled in Canada and USA put forward a proposal to pressurise their Governments to fix immigration quotas for Tibetans every year. Apart from this, the Tibetans in USA and Canada have decided to sponsor Tibetan families from Bhutan. The Dalai Lama will, perhaps, make a last minute appeal to the Government of India to permit the refugees to come to India. "We can only exert moral pressure on New Delhi", explained a Tibetan spokesman. "We feel justified in doing this since these refugees were originally coming to India, and were settled in Bhutan by India at the Indian Government's expense." In the meantime reports from Thimpu indicate that the king of Bhutan has repeated his charge that the Tibetan refugees are a security risk to Bhutan. The situation is really grim for the refugees in Bhutan. "If Bhutan carries out its threat and the world doesn't raise a finger in protest", says 35-year-old Wangkhang, an educated Tibetan, "it would be a sad day for the refugees of the world."

A. J. SINGH, Dharamsala

continue. According to the management of the company, the only reason why the Railway is not functioning, is because the Government is not willing to provide some funds to help it along the way. The workers say that once the railway gets started, the Government will come forward with the grant.

But while the stalemate continues, the workers suffer. Two years after the Railway stopped functioning, most of the workers can still be seen on the platform of Fatuah station in tattered clothes. Four engines and twenty bogies of the Fatuah Railway are lying unused. Said an engine driver: "You don't know how difficult it is for us to pull along under such situations. I hope for our sake that some solution is reached."

In Fatuah district there are two factories—a scooter factory and a tractor factory. It is also a centre for the wholesale trading of food-grains. Bricks are also made here. With the closure of the Fatuah Railway, which served as the main means of transportation for these items, the farmers are facing a massive problem. They now have to resort to other means of transportation, which mostly, are more expensive. And the Government employees and students in remote villages are facing a similar problem. A student complained: "There is no student concession in private buses and we have to travel long distances everyday. Travelling by train used to be so much cheaper. Besides, the prices of items of daily use have gone up a lot in Hilsa and Islamapur. This is only because the Fatuah Railway is now closed".

According to Vijaya Krishna, a leader of the workers of the Fatuah Railway, the land on which the tracks of the Fatuah Railway are built, belongs to the Government. Only the engines, the bogies and accessories belong to the company. In 1920, the company and the Government came to an understanding, that the profits of the Fatuah Railway would be shared. But if the Railway ran at a loss, then the Government would provide compensation. But as K. N. Prasad, the travelling ticket checker of the Fatuah Railway said: "Every year the Company earns profits from the Railway. But in the records they show a loss. The company is not interested in the railway business and they want the Government to take it over, including of course the huge loan that the company has taken from the Government. There was another agreement in 1948 by which the Government was entitled to take over the Railway after paying Rs 25 lakhs as compensation to the company. So you see the Government will have to pay in both cases. If it wants to see the trains running it will have to give a grant to the Company and if it takes over the Company then it will have to pay compensation. So while this stalemate continues, we will have to face the music".

ARUN RANJAN, Patna

Off the rails

Closure of another light railway



Krishna Murari K. Shan

The condition of the tracks after the floods

WHEN the Arrah-Sasaram Light Railway belonging to Martin Burn Limited was officially declared closed its employees were jubilant. Their reason: they would get jobs in the Indian Railways. Now, the workers of its sister concern, the Fatuah-Islampur Light Railway, are pressurising the management to shut it down totally. And their reason is the same.

Martin Burn Limited, as a private company ran, at one time, seven light railways. Started in 1922, the Fatuah railway went through 200 remote villages in Bihar and carried about eight to ten thousand passengers daily. After the flood of 1976,

the management declared its 44 kms railway track between Patna and Nalanda districts damaged and consequently untrafficable. This forced a lock-out. Since then 250 workers are without work. In March 1977, the line was re-opened for a short period. But after two months, in May, the line was declared closed. The workers then launched an unsuccessful strike, which was called off in February 1978. Since then no worker has received his salary.

The workers want the Railway to be declared dead or at best, they want the railway line to be reopened. One thing is clear: they do not want the present state of affairs to



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Difficult time for women

Crime rate in Punjab rises

JANUARY 18 was a black Friday for 22-year-old housewife Jogindero of Unnamkot village near Sannaur. According to her, just around midnight she was forcibly taken out of her house, put in a police jeep and taken to the Patiala Sadar Police station where she was allegedly molested and raped repeatedly by policemen.

According to the sarpanch of the village, Sohni Ram, about half a dozen persons in mufti went to the house of Khairati Ram, Jogindero's husband at around 11 pm. They started searching the house despite the objections of Jogindero. Later Jogindero was beaten by the policemen. Her husband along with Neela, Bhana, Pyara and some others objected to this behaviour of the police. The ASI who accompanied the policemen fired a few shots and even beat up those who had protested. In her written complaint to the then Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal, the Social Welfare Minister, Mrs Satwant Kaur Sandhu, and others Jogindero alleged that she had been taken away from the village and molested on the way to the police station by policemen who were drunk. She stated that she had been raped in the police lock-up. Jogindero has demanded a proper enquiry and punishment to the errant policemen.

The police authorities have a different version to offer. They say that a police party had gone to the village to investigate a robbery which had been registered in the Patiala Sadar Police Station on the complaint of Babulal. Babulal had stated that around 7.45 pm on January 18, three persons including Khairati Ram had waylaid him. They inflicted knife wounds and took away Rs 450 and a transistor. Sudesh Kumar and Devinder Singh, both ASIs and four constables went to the village. They reached Khairati's house and wanted to arrest him. However, Jogindero and another woman Bansi, along with Sohni Ram, Bhana, Pyara, Mohinder, Neela Ram and others resisted the arrest of Khairati Ram. They are supposed to have brought out "gandas" (sharpedged weapons) and attacked the policeman. In the melee Khairati Ram escaped. A case under sections 307, 353, 333, 148 and 149 of the CrPC (preventing a government servant from performing his duty and using arms for the purpose and attempt to murder) was made out. Jogindero was mentioned as a culprit in the case. The violent crowd used weapons as a result of which one ASI suffered head injuries and another policeman was hurt. This provoked Sudesh Kumar to fire

a shot in the air to disperse the crowd. Later, Jogindero was arrested and taken to the police station. The police have denied any ill treatment of Jogindero and no further arrests were made till January 29.

The Superintendent of Police Headquarters in Chandigarh is believed to have made enquiries and found no substance in the young housewife's allegations. This is not the first time that such serious allegations have been levelled against policemen coming as it does within days of UP's Narainpur incident. (SUNDAY, February 10).

It is significant that the Punjab Government has passed clear instructions that women would not be taken to police stations for interrogation. The question that comes to

mind is : The police not only took the woman away but also allegedly did the mischief. The police authorities explain that the State Government's directive does not bar the police from taking away an accused woman to the police station in serious cases as attempt to murder which Jogindero has been charged with.

There are certain points in the two versions which need to be clarified. Only one person was apprehended by the police due to the armed attack. The sarpanch, Sohni Ram, was not questioned, even after nine days of the incident. Whatever the facts of the case it would be worthwhile to note the crime situation in the State. The total number of cases registered rose from 48,780 in 1975 to 55,330 in 1979. Interestingly, in the past year the number of murders recorded was 587. There were as many as 305 cases of kidnapping and 84 of rape.

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandigarh

The plight of Kashmiri labourers

For how long will they be exploited?



Kashmiri labourers from villages assemble in Srinagar

AS winter sets in rendering a big chunk of the labour force in Kashmir, mainly engaged in agriculture or the tourist trade, idle, an exodus of labourers starts from the Kashmir valley. Their concentration is dense in places such as Chandigarh, Amritsar, Jullundur, Ambala, Ludhiana and Simla. Nearly 95,000 labourers thronged these places in 1978 and the number is expected to cross one lakh in 1980. In the early Fifties the migratory labour force was below 10,000. But with the rising cost of living and the employment market shrinking the number has shot up. Improved transport facilities between the valley and the outside world and within the valley itself have further intensified the migration. A sharp

rise is witnessed when the valley is hit by drought or other such natural calamity. Most of these labourers work in rice mills, railway goods sheds, grain, vegetable and fruit markets and wood and coal depots. A good number of them ply rickshaws.

Do these labourers earn enough to meet their personal expenses and also send money home to family members dependent upon them? The answer is no. The reason for this is the exploitation of Kashmiri labourers which has been going on for years with impunity. With the Jammu and Kashmir Government having no powers over labourers working in other States and the concerned State Governments showing no concern to

Mushtaq Bhatnagar

better their lot, the plight of labourers continues to be miserable. "We are treated like aliens in Chandigarh," complained Youssuf, 38, who hails from Pattan, some 35 kms off Srinagar, towards the west.

The main problem confronting them is the acute shortage of accommodation. Under a centrally sponsored scheme labour hostels were constructed at Chandigarh, Simla and Amritsar by the respective State Governments. But, unfortunately, these hostels are being used for purposes other than housing labourers. One has to see to believe the conditions in which these labourers live at their places of work. Sanitation is absent, hygiene and privacy non-existent. Flies breed, cockroaches wander around and mosquitoes hover above. No wonder cholera broke out in such a colony at Chandigarh. For instance, in ten rooms at Chandigarh sleep 150 persons, huddled together. But what about those who sleep outside, in the open, on pavements, in alleys? Said Bashir, "It is indeed torture. Biting cold virtually numbs us. Most of the time we are awake and do not get sleep".

Not many can afford to go in for rented accommodation. Even hiring a shanty hut is beyond the reach of the majority. "Who can afford paying Rs. 45 for a room," remarked Ali Mohammed who is working, at Rs. 3.50 in a railway goods shed. "If we are paid reasonable wages then we may consider renting a shelter".

The most brazen form of exploitation is witnessed in rice mills. The general complaint of nearly 35,000 labourers is the absurdly low wages they earn. A labourer is paid Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 for ten hours of non-stop work. Anyone raising a whisper is thrown out. The condition of labourers working in railway goods sheds is no better. They are not paid the wages specified under the Minimum Wages Act. "Jamadars" or middlemen prey upon their earnings. They are parasites sustaining on the sweat of poor labourers. These labourers come with hopes of earning some money to make a saving. But they soon realise that while they are preferred to other workers, wages paid to them are miserably low — so low that they cannot even eke out a simple living.

"We are always in search of Kashmiri labour. They are hard working and possess tremendous capacity to take a heavy load on their back," admitted a trader. Then, why are they paid low wages? The strength of labourers increases sharply during winter and dwindles during summer months. Out of nearly 95,000 labourers more than 76,000 (80 per cent), are of a transitory nature. They throng the plains during November-December and trek back during April. It is this mighty strength during winter months that works against labourers. Reacting to a situation in which labour is abundant and easily available the traders and others

arbitrarily reduce their wages during winter months. Thus, the disparity in wages during the winter and the summer months.

"During summer I am paid Rs. 5 a day and as other labourers start pouring in my wages are reduced. If I open my mouth I will be kicked out. There are many who are ready to work on lower wages owing to poverty," said Gulzar who has been working in Chandigarh for more than eight years — both during summer and winter. But their difficulties would have been less acute had they been organised. The disorganised state of these workers only encourages traders to exploit them. It was in this context that the labourers of Kalka in Himachal Pradesh with the help of the Jammu and Kashmir Government's Labour Department, formed a society called "Kashmir Labourers Cooperative Society—Kalka". The society is given contracts for various types of work in the Kalka railway shed like loading and unloading of goods. The middlemen have thus been eliminated from the scene. What is earned is distributed among the labourers equitably. "Previously we were pawns in the hands of a few exploiters. But now we are happy and can send money home. Hopefully, the experience of the workers in Kalka will serve as an inspiration to the rest of the Kashmiri workers.

ASHOK OGRA, Srinagar

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The meaning of victory

IT has been a short-lived euphoria. Hardly six weeks have passed since Mrs Gandhi made a triumphant comeback, and yet it is not uncommon to find Congress (I) leaders with long faces. Only a handful, those who still hope to collect the rewards of office at the Centre and in the States, are vociferously pledging their loyalty to the Leader and to the Emerging Leader. The indifference of the mass of Congressmen was evident from the fact that the turnout at both the victory rallies and the stage-managed demonstrations to demand the dissolution of non-Congress(I) State Governments was rather poor. In fact dejection is writ large on the faces of politicians of all kinds, whether they belong to the Congress (I) or the Opposition.

Last week, a bewildered but perceptive Congress (I) manager who played an important part in organising the election campaign shared his impressions with me precisely on these lines, and asked me the reasons for this state of affairs. Opposition leaders feeling dejected is understandable. They genuinely feel that the reemergence of Mrs Gandhi does not augur well for the country and is very bad news for them personally. But why should a large number of Congress (I) people feel dispirited?

The election results have reinforced one stunning truth. In this country, personality is more important than symbols, flags, Parties and programmes. Once, it was Gandhiji who in the public mind was synonymous with the Congress; later it was Jawaharlal Nehru and now it is Indira Gandhi. When Netaji Subhas Bose challenged Gandhiji politically, Subhasbabu was reduced to a marginal factor in Indian politics. When Purshotam Das Tandon as Congress president challenged Nehru, he was thrown into the political dustbin and the entire Congress rallied behind Nehru. Now it is Indira Gandhi. On January 1, 1978 when Lalit Maken thundered at Delhi's Vithalbhai Bhawan where the Congress was being split that in a country where stone images were worshipped, what was wrong in worshipping Indira Gandhi, we journalists sneered at him. Alas, how right Maken was. How many of the Congress stalwarts' heads have rolled in dust because of her? This "roll of honour" includes Kamaraj, Morarji Desai, Jagjivan Ram and the latest victim, Devraj Urs. The only difference between the good old days and the present is that in



the past dissidence within wide limits was permitted but the limits of dissidence have now been narrowed.

Another qualitative change in the situation is that even though the principle of dynasticism was sought to be enforced, the voters accepted it. Before the elections, Mrs Gandhi clearly served notice on the people: "Not me alone, but my son also". Thus, Sanjay Gandhi and a large number of his friends were given Congress (I) tickets and most of them won. Will it be too wrong, if some people take it as an indirect endorsement of the principle of dynastic rule? If there were any doubts on this score, they were dispelled when a young Calcutta business executive, Arun Nehru was given a Congress (I) ticket to contest from Rae Bareilly. What are the qualifications of Arun Nehru? The day his nomination was announced A. R. Antulay, general secretary of the AICC, helplessly told newsmen that he did not know Mr Nehru's background. Do our intelligent readers need to be told that the only qualification of this gentleman is that he carries the surname of Nehru? Indeed, practically all political Parties are guilty of sanctifying the principle of dynasticism in politics.

Perhaps this has something to do with our backward, semi-feudal economic and social structure. Barring about one crore people employed in the organised sector, there is no occupational mobility in the country. A peasant's son will become a peasant, a shopkeeper's son will become a shopkeeper, an industrialist's son will become an industrialist and in most cases a self-employed professional's son will go into the profession of his father. Only my son will not automatically be able to become a journalist since I don't own a paper. There are many other young men who are in the same boat. But a majority of my country's young men are in the 'dynastic' boat, and they do not resent a leader's son automatically becoming a leader. A good lineage facilitates the climb on the ladder of politics. Things have

come to such a pass that in the major political Party, which is the Congress (I), you cannot survive and prosper unless you pledge total loyalty to the mother and the son. Dare you show some dissent, you will be finished politically in no time. Friends and admirers of Bhagawat Jha Azad, who refused to be a Minister of State, are keeping their fingers crossed about the fate which awaits him.

If this predicament is not a sufficient cause of dejection among those Congressmen without any lineage and with some self-respect, what could be more? But there is more Congressmen can be resigned to their fate and continue to serve the mother and the son with blind loyalty if they are convinced that they are being led on the path of Nirvana. But Mrs Gandhi's style of functioning in the first six weeks of her re-emergence is not very reassuring. Mr Sanjay Gandhi's imprint is too visible in the selection of the first instalment of Ministers. The basis of the selection was not merit but loyalty. And in the first session of Parliament, only P. V. Narasimha Rao made a mark. After the Cabinet-making came the time for other key appointments. One story goes that after the Home Ministry had processed, and the Prime Minister had nearly approved the appointment of one police officer as Police Commissioner of Delhi, Sanjay Gandhi got it scuttled and P. S. Bhinder was appointed Police Commissioner after superseding nearly 150 police officers. The story is unconfirmed, but no one in Delhi doubts Mr Sanjay Gandhi's power.

Then came the arrest of N. K. Singh and the dissolution of Assemblies. One link in the whole chain is the pressure of Sanjay Gandhi on his mother. Perhaps all this is causing so much distraction that Mrs Gandhi has not been able to stop the drift on the economic front. Congressmen sense the danger all the more since there are no institutional safety valves. And Mrs Gandhi does not recognise anyone between her and the masses. Thus far, except for a customary meeting of the (nominated) working committee, no other Party body of the Congress (I) has met after the victory. This will be the pattern in the coming days. Mrs Gandhi's greatest contribution is de-institutionalisation of Indian politics. Mrs Gandhi has resurrected the old support base of the Congress—but not its organisation. It remains to be seen how effective this style of functioning will be in the 1980s.

THE WORLD

Come back Pierre, Joe's too dull



This seems to be the year of the Big Comeback. First, Mrs Gandhi. And now, in perhaps an even more stunning victory, by Pierre Trudeau. The 60-year-old charismatic French Canadian, who, together with his wife, never seemed to leave the headlines (either for political reasons or personal) had been defeated just nine months ago by the stolid 40-year-old Joe Clark; and about three months ago Trudeau had bid a tearful farewell to politics at a Press conference. Then suddenly Clark called for a fresh election after being defeated in Parliament, Trudeau was

summoned back by his Liberal Party to lead them in the elections, and he swept the polls. Not even the successful escape of six American hostages from Iran through the offices of the Canadian ambassador, which caused a last-minute surge in Clark's popularity, could help him against the experienced and debonair Pierre Trudeau. What amazing things fate has in store for people! Two months ago Trudeau was a divorced, humiliated and beaten man. Today he is the Prime Minister. Were there any astrologers in Canada who predicted this?

Thirty-eight years later

The hunt for onetime members of the dreaded SS continues unabated. Thirty-eight years after the horror of the deportation and murder of thousands of French Jews, three former officers of the SS were convicted by a Cologne court in February: Kurt Lischka, Hitler's deputy chief of Gescapo in France; Herbert Hagen, personal assistant to senior SS officer; and Ernst Heinrichsohn, who had been in charge of the Paris "Jewish Department". Lischka was sentenced to 10 years, Hagen to 12 and Heinrichsohn to six. The defence, however, had asked for acquittals and said that

appeals on points of law would be made.

The three were charged with responsibility for the deportation of at least 73,000 Jews to Auschwitz and other death camps in Poland between 1942 and 1944. Heinrichsohn and Hagen claimed that they did not know the reason for the deportation and believed that the prisoners were being sent to labour camps. The presiding judge, Dr Heinz Fassbender, however, said there was a wealth of evidence to show that the prisoners would be killed and that their deportation to labour camps was only a cover-up.

Hoodwinked

Robin Hood is alive and well and working as a product development manager in north Yorkshire. Not the legendary Robin Hood, of course, but someone who might just be a relative of his. The twentieth century Robin is a man with a mission—and a fairly difficult one at that. He is taking it upon himself to prove that the original Robin Hood was a Yorkshireman and not a citizen of Nottinghamshire as is generally accepted.

It will not be smooth sailing. Already there are people who are snorting derisively at their claims. Mr Jim Lees, a researcher for the Robin Hood society at Nottingham, says that the Yorkshire claim is sheer nonsense. He has even gone so far as to suggest that the Yorkshiresmen could have twisted the evidence. Nothing can shake his belief that Robin Hood performed his celebrated feats

within five miles of Nottingham and had nothing whatever to do with Yorkshire.

The debate will rage, possibly forever. People will get bogged down, lose interest and the matter will be forgotten, only to be revived when new evidence crops up. Both Yorkshiresmen and their counterparts in Nottinghamshire will remain convinced that the great Robin Hood lived in their forests first with his band of merry men and later with his childhood sweetheart, the beautiful Maid Marion. There is one last interesting point however. Legend has it that Robin, on the point of death, fired an arrow from his bed and asked to be buried where it landed. About 25 years ago a group of archers tried to reproduce the shot and fell far short of the stone which now marks his reputed grave. One more point to Yorkshire.

Best of both worlds

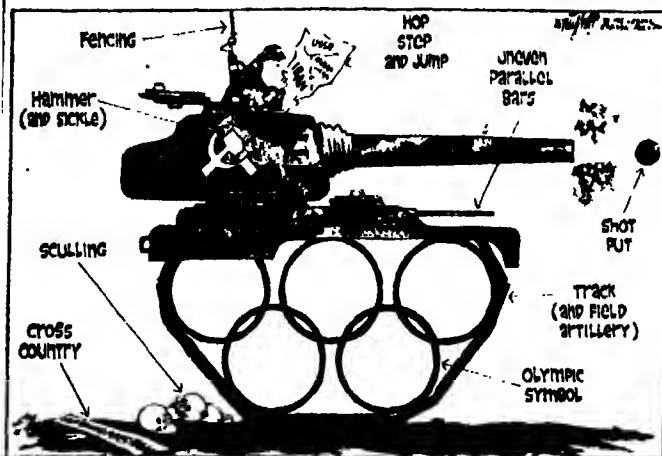


George Best in action

recognise him without it. But that was in the good old days, when the goals came by the dozen, the girls came by the score, and all his flouting of rules was overlooked because of his brilliant football. Gradually all that began to change.

The millionaire soccer star's tantrums were given a lot more space in the International Press, till finally, in mid-February he went just that little bit too far. He was sacked for being at an all-night party when he should have been sound asleep, resting for his football game. Best's team—the Scottish club, Hibernian—were scheduled to play an important game against Ayr United. The Hibernian chairman found that Best had been out at a party till a few hours before the game and dismissed him immediately. This is not the first time that Best has got the worst of it from the authorities. But Best's footballing genius has always brought the crowds.

The boycott game



"We will not participate in the Olympics this summer" announced Mr Carter, not Jimmy but Hodding, an American State Department spokesman on February 20 in Bonn even while 200,000 prospective tour guides were being trained in Moscow for the Games. The announcement came at the end of the one-month deadline for the Soviet army to pull out of Afghanistan. In late January 1980, the Carter administration had proposed that the Olympic Games be moved, to some other country, postponed or boycotted to protest the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

France, meanwhile has scotched a move by the European Economic Countries for a boycott, and the US's comrade-in-arms, China has extended a deadline to Russia to pull out troops by May. Only the International Olympic Committee (IOC) can decide the fate of the 1980 Games and the IOC president Lord Killanin has stated point-blank: "It's Moscow or nowhere." Let's see who wins this bout—Jimmy Carter who boasts that he has already 50 countries under his boycott belt or Lord Killanin who presides over the world's largest leap year festivities.

Close encounter—well, almost



Senator Edward Kennedy is flexing his muscles for an eyeball-to-eyeball encounter: a debate with President Jimmy Carter. But the President refuses to be drawn out of his lair. In the middle of February Teddy Kennedy thought he had a chance of luring the President to such a debate when

both had been invited to speak to the Consumer Federation of America. Kennedy had to sit, at Mr Carter's request, in an adjoining room while he spoke first. As soon as Jimmy finished he left and in true Kennedy fashion Teddy remarked: "Who was the man who just rushed out of here?"

Up in arms

Who has offered ultra-centrifuges (used in making nuclear bombs) and armoured cars to Libya? Who is planning to sell Leopard tanks to Saudi Arabia? Who is discussing with Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries the supply of the most modern computerised fire-control systems for tanks and artillery? All fingers point at West German businessmen who are finalising hush-hush deals in direct contravention of the West German Government's directive of June 16, 1971

of "no export of arms to zones of tension". It is the Foreign Ministry in Bonn which decides whether the destination of the military equipment is a "zone of tension". But all legal connotations can be waived if necessary. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Defence Minister Hans Apel have recently been under a lot of pressure from businessmen to relax the laws of defence sales. And the Middle East's answer to West Germany? Well, it could have been "Tanks a lot".

Yes, sir—I mean, ma'am



"I don't think you are a particularly good investment," — Sherry Lansing's father is supposed to have told her when she had asked for a loan. At that time she was without a husband, without a job and without luck. Sherry became a model, and went on to memorable parts in *Love* and *Rio Lobo* (one of those rare films in which John Wayne did not kill villains). Then things began happening. Her rise to the position of The Boss of the Twentieth Century-Fox studio came in leaps and bounds.

She had been a mathematics teacher in a Los Angeles high school. In 1975 she became an executive story editor with Metro Goldwyn Mayer and in 1977 joined Columbia as vice-president in charge of production. She has been very careful in her business dealings and is at the moment building up a strong group of aides at the Fox studio. "I consider myself a very strong, aggressive woman", she said. Presumptuous males, beware! You have nothing to lose but your jobs.

LIVING

Indira's India

INDE

HOMMES, RITES ET DIEUX



INDIRA GANDHI

JEAN-LOUIS NOU

There's this exciting new book called *Inde: Hommes, Rites et Dieux* (India: the people, rites and gods). It is a collection of wonderful photographs, whose French captions and essays have been written by someone we all know very well indeed: Mrs Indira Gandhi. The pictures, by Jean-louis Nou, are images of India's people, customs, festivals and places of pilgrimage. The writing deals with various aspects of Indian life, its moods, its fancies, its obsessions, its beliefs. The jacket says of the author: "Madame Indira Gandhi offers her own vision of India in her characteristically direct style, with enthusiasm, lucid and sometimes critical judgment. She has painted vigorously a picture of India's history and culture, of the metaphysics, social customs, struggle for independence and role of the women."

The work was done, apparently, during Mrs Gandhi's days out of power. The book, which boasts a glossy white

cover jacket bearing a picture of a woman dressed as Krishna in full regalia, was printed at Lausanne, Switzerland, by Editra S. A. and is priced in India at Rs 500. However, the Indian distributors, B. I. Publications, plan to publish 3,000 copies of an Indian edition in collaboration with Editra to be sold at a "special Indian price" of Rs. 400. George Allen and Unwin of England



have brought out an English edition.

The pictures are gems in themselves that bear ample testimony to the brilliance of Jean-louis. The popular photographer persuaded Mrs Gandhi to write the captions, although this is not his maid-



en work on India. Two of his previous books were *India, I Love You* and *The Art of India*, the latter written by Shiva Ramamurthy. Jean-louis is currently working on a book of pictures of Maharaja's palaces. Who'll it be this time, Monsieur?

Big daddy of Europe's theatre

What was his name again? Grotesqui? Grotowski — that's right, Jerzy Grotowski. One can for give Ashish Rajadhyaksha for repeating it three times over the teleprinter so that we wouldn't get it wrong. Well, Mr G (need we give you the full name again?) paid a very hush-hush visit to Bombay to gather some new recruits for his theatre laboratory at Mroclaw (hope we got it right) in the Polish Eastern Territories. He held a number of auditions for hordes of young hopefuls who are looking for breaks. He certainly has some reputation. For a start he has been hailed as the high priest of European avant garde theatre, so it was no surprise when scores of starry-eyed young hopefuls from the city's film and theatre circuits turned up to try their luck at the audition. Grotowski's theatre has emerged as a reaction to cinema and TV, which ordinary theatre, however innovative, can never hope to equal. He has evolved a form that can exist without

makeup, costumes, stages, lighting and sound effects. It is, in effect, a theatre that challenges the notion of the theatre as a synthesis. Quite something, that.

When playwright/director Satyadev Dubey was contacted to confirm whether Grotowski was in town, he showed considerable surprise that the news had leaked out. "You're not supposed to know that he is here, so please don't try to contact him," was the terse comment. It is reported however that the Polish director was astonished at the standard fare of the Indian theatre. About the Badal Sircar movement he is supposed to have said: "That sort of thing is being done in every college in America. I'm surprised that the form alone should so excite Indian audiences when there is no major ideology behind it."

P. S. Guess who is likely to go to Poland? None other than Nasiruddin Shah, although this hasn't been confirmed. In retrospect, however, maybe his selection wasn't such a great surprise.

Turning the tables

He's been bordering on the threshold of the bigtime for some years. As a matter of fact, Venugopalan Chandrasekar was being hailed the "uncrowned king" of Indian table tennis even though he had never claimed the national title. Certainly he had given a lot of other great players their share of nervous moments. Indeed, apart from beating many of his compatriots on the national circuit, he has fared better than most of them on the international circuit as well. He was ranked in the number 10 slot in the Commonwealth, two places ahead of the only other Indian to be ranked: Sudhir Phadke. Shortly after winning the national title, he told Ashok Kamath that he sincerely felt he had a good chance of achieving what had eluded him in the previous two nationals. "The only people whom I thought would trouble me were Manjit Dua and S. Srilam. Another reason was that I've been having a good season". Interestingly enough, he won the title at the recently concluded Durgapur Nationals by beating none other than Sanjay Kathuria, the person who had first hailed him as the "uncrowned king".



Royal connections, albeit dubious

Richard Murphy is a difficult person to describe. Poet. Recluse. Pacifist. Most important, of course, his is a major name in the world of Irish literature. He was in India during the third week of February this year in a sponsored visit and as he himself puts it — "in the hope that I will try and learn something about the country". He hopes to write about India when he gets back home. What struck him most about the country? His was a frank answer: "The people here have developed a curious fatalism towards whatever is handed down to them. They accept their destiny with a passivity that I think is unique to India. It is something I do not understand". His knowledge on Mahatma Gandhi was astonishing but then Gandhi has always embodied much of what India meant for him. Murphy is no stranger to

the region. "I spent my first ten years in Sri Lanka — or Ceylon, as it was known then—and was very much a part of the elite British community. My entire life was an offshoot of the tradition of the British Raj. Summer holidays in Kandy; toupees so that we would not get sunstroke; but most of all, the pet phrase of the era that my nanny was always dinnling into my head. 'We're not like that'. It was always a case of let the natives do what they like. He knows the meaning of conflicting loyalties, too. He explained "My father was the chairman of the Municipal Council and later Mayor of Colombo—thoroughly loyal to the British. But a problem arose when the question of Irish independence came up. You see, we are actually descendants of Charles I, although admittedly in an illegitimate line".

The eclipse eclipsed

For the hordes of people watching the eclipse at Konarak's Sun Temple lawns, attention focussed on scientist Alan Friedman of the University of California, Berkeley. Those who did not want to risk their eyesight by gazing at the sun concentrated instead on what he was doing, as Nirmal Mitra discovered. At one point, when Friedman found the curious crowd was getting a bit too close for comfort, he started an impromptu astronomy class. He stood on the Sun Temple wall and explained the various ways an eclipse could be viewed. The mysteries of sun spots were clarified in simple prose and Friedman went on to explain why it was the partial eclipse—and not the total eclipse—that was harmful to watch. Naturally, the crowd loved every minute of it and the bald professor was followed wherever he went. The other dozen-odd foreigners who had arrived in the same bus as Friedman—and who were initially mistaken for

scientists—were forgotten once it became apparent that they were just rich tourists who knew as much about eclipses as the crowd did. Once the eclipse itself began, the people literally fell over each other in their eagerness to view the sight through the beautiful red spherical telescope that Friedman had set up. They were certainly in good company. A contingent of local police who had been deputed to guard the scientists in case they were mobbed also took time off to have a peep. Ninety minutes later, after the best part of the eclipse was over, a journalist rushed up to the popular professor with a tape recorder in his hand and asked him for his reactions. The whole crowd waited spellbound for the expert's opinion. "It was just beautiful," he said, "It happened on schedule and I'm proud that science could predict such a thing so accurately". The crowd nodded approvingly. For them, Alan Friedman had been the best part of the eclipse.

Beer-powered



Greg Chappell, Kim Hughes and Mike Brearley

Strange as it may seem, Greg Chappell has never played cricket in India. Nor, for that matter, has he ever played a Test against us. He was not in the Australian squad that toured India in 1969-70 under the captaincy of Bill Lawry; and when Bedi's team went to Australia in the winter of 1977 the Chappell brothers were playing for Kerry Packer. Nor could Greg be included in the team that toured India last year, as the WSC players were still "serving time" prior to their inclusion. "I would love to play here," said Chappell, "It's always

nice to play in front of such mammoth crowds. From what I have heard, the people here are pretty enthusiastic and knowledgeable when it comes to cricket. One aspect of his character that emerged during the brief conversation was his modesty. "I don't remember how many runs I have scored in Test cricket," he said and he was dead serious. Chappell observed that shortly after his team's arrival in Bombay, they all sat down to breakfast and the first thing his men ordered was beer. "They're a crazy bunch," he added, smiling.

FRENZIED excitement is building up as the two Khan brothers, Sanjay and Feroz, are giving the final touches to their respective films. Feroz is leading the race because *Qurbani's* completion has been announced. However, even as the official announcement came, Feroz was still shooting a few night scenes in a five-star hotel in the city. Sanjay's famous *Abdullah*, or rather the film made famous by the fight

Malini's look-alike but she shook off this image at the beginning of her career. Bindiya resented being compared with Hema; obviously, she wanted to establish herself as Bindiya and nobody else. But there was no doubting the fact that privately she felt delighted at being compared to the number one actress in the industry. Now Bindiya is ecstatic because she is actually doing a film with Hema Malini. And

AS recently as two months ago, everyone thought that Leena Chandavarkar had fallen for Kishore Kumar. There were even rumours that the two were secretly married. Subsequently, people thought that Leena would no longer be considered for the heroine's role by any producer. Imagine a top producer's surprise when he received a telephone call on New Year's day from Leena, first softly wishing him a

happy new year and then asking him if there was good emotional role available in the film he had just announced. She was apparently under the impression that the female cast had not been finalised and that he might consider her for a good role. Come to think of it, she never had to beg for roles when she was working. Now, she may have to say goodbye to films if she wants Kishore by her side. ■



Parveen Babi: weighty problems

between Sanjay and Zeenat, is not yet ready for release. Both the brothers have cast Zeenat in the heroine's role. Feroz claims that Zeenat looks extremely beautiful in *Qurbani* but Sanjay boasts that the lady has given her career-best performance for *Abdullah*. It's going to be a keen fight and no one should enjoy it more than the audience.

PARVEEN BABI has finally returned to Bombay but her producers are now worried about the visible change in the heroine: she has put on weight, which is very unusual for her and she carries the hangover of a recent trauma in her eyes.

BINDIYA GOSWAMI has finally realised her secret ambition. She entered films as Hema

what's more, they are cast as sisters—whoever got the bright idea of casting the two together must have been goaded on by Bindiya herself: As for Hema, she is very amused and gives a nervous little laugh as she denies any resemblance to the younger star.

Bindiya Goswami and Sunil Dutt



KHAAS BAAT

WHAT is not good enough for Shashi Kapoor is acceptable to Kannada actor Anant Nag. A couple of years ago, Shashi Kapoor wanted director M. S. Sathyu (of *Garam Hava* fame) to make a film on any daring subject. Sathyu thought for a while and decided to make a film based on (an) unpublished story written by the controversial Kannada author Anantamurthy. Entitled *Bara*, the plot revolved around the frustrations of a conscientious bureaucrat in the famine-stricken areas of B.dar in Karnataka. After showing initial enthusiasm for the project, Shashi backed out of it fearing that some of the political situations depicted in the film may provoke the censors and frighten the distributors. So Sathyu went into hibernation and finally with the aid of Film Finance Corporation launched the film six months ago. And Anant Nag, one of the finest actors in the south, gladly agreed to act in the film.

A YOUNG film maker who launched a film starring Saritha some time ago is now accusing her of ditching the project because she wanted to work for another venture which her guru (and lover?) was directing. Not that such things don't happen but Saritha has been acting in more than a dozen films. How come that she hasn't ditched all her producers?

THOUGH his maiden directorial venture *Muphina Ota* in Kannada was not a smash hit, debutant Shankar Nag is going ahead with a new film which is based on a ghost story. Once again Shankar and Anant will be seen together.

OREY MUTHAM starring Sumitra, Jai Ganesh and Srikanth has not done particularly well. It is a long, long time since Sumitra has had even a mild hit to her credit. She has been waiting for the release of *Maialai Pattalam* directed by Lakshmi. Incidentally, the film was to be released last year as a tribute to children. And since Lakshmi has not made



Seema and Rajnikant

a successful film in Tamil for a long time, cynics think that she will not do well as a director.

IN Bombay, one hears that distributors aren't exactly rushing to back up new Amitabh films after the "discouraging" performances of *Kala Patthar* and *Suhaag* at the box office. And yet, what prompted two Madras producers to pay Amitabh the highest fee received by an Indian star? Well, the untitled project, budgeted at Rs 150 lakhs, is inspired by *Shankar Guru*, an all-time hit in Kannada. As in the original version, the hero will play three roles. This partly explains the fabulous remuneration. The film is being directed by S. Ramanathan: Amitabh is quite choosy about his directors, and yet, he okayed Ramanathan a soft spoken, genial person. Not many

will remember now but Ramanathan was the director of one of Amitabh's films called *Bombay to Goa* made by comedian-producer Mahmood ten years ago.

DID former villain, Anandan, select the title of his new film *Nattak Kakkum Kai* (The hand that saved the nation) innocently? Or did the recent Parliamentary election prompt him to go for it? Well, one doesn't know what the film is about but surely Anandan is playing the hero and Reena is his screen heart-throb.

WHEN will they stop featuring senior artistes in those boring first night bedroom scenes? Recently K. R. Vijaya and Jai Ganesh were seen blushing and acting coy in scenes shot for an up-and-coming Tamil film *Gowri*.

DESPITE all the encouragement from wife Sheela and the general goodwill of the film industry, hero Ravichandran's comeback bid isn't yet successful. His film *Bombay Mail* 109 vanished after three weeks of indifferent patronage by audiences in the south.

JUST as one was thinking why charming Kannada actress Ashwini should be so reluctant to act in more Tamil films, one got the good news that she's going to star in *Oru Kai Osai*, a film directed by Bhagyaraj. The director himself will play the hero: he has also penned the story and the dialogue.

ONE isn't surprised that for his dual role in J. Mahendran's forthcoming crime thriller *Johnny*, actor Rajnikant got the highest remuneration yet received by a Tamil star. Well, the man who was thought of as a whimsical actor is growing in stature every day. And what's more, he even managed to curb his irritating mannerisms in a film directed by S. P. Muthuraman. In the meanwhile, Rajnikant's *Billa* (never mind the bad reviews) is keeping the box office extremely busy.

SINCE Sridhar's prestigious venture *Soundaryame Varuga Varuga* starring Sripriya, Sivachandran and Ratni did very badly at the box office, producers who were thinking of shooting their films in the United States are rather hesitant now. This is certainly not the first time: it has been proved that exotic locations do not always provide exciting entertainment.

SINCE Jayalalitha's comeback venture *Nadhyai Thedhanda Kadal* was a miserable failure (she wasn't too bad in it) other producers who had signed a rather slim Jayalalitha are now certainly worried. But then one flop should not stop her from staging a spectacular comeback.

PIOUSJI



Beginning March 2

This week the Sun, Mercury and Kethu are conjoined in Aquarius, Venus alone is in Aries, Rahu, Jupiter and Mars are in Leo, Uranus and Neptune are in Scorpio. The Moon will be moving through Virgo and Libra from Leo.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) An unexpected upheaval or journey will be followed by financial benefits and happier times. Elders retard progress and cause concern. Young associates will help you in your career. Take care of your own health and that of elderly relatives in your family. You will overcome your difficulties successfully. Love and matrimonial affairs are in the offing. **Good dates:** 3, 4, 6 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) Take care of your health as well as children in the family. Guard against colds. Courtship and auspicious affairs should be deferred. Your financial position improves after you adopt modern methods. Do not spend all your gain on pleasure and friends. An unexpected journey is also predicted. **Good dates:** 5, 6 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** North-west.



GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) Avoid erratic changes. Some good fortune and happiness is in the offing. You will benefit in unexpected ways. A promotion is on the cards. Expedite business and make changes if desired. Elders will contribute to your good fortunes. You are advised to exercise caution in your love, domestic and social affairs since disappointment and disillusionment are foreseen. **Good dates:** 3, 5 and 6. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 10. **Favourable direction:** South-east.



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) The first two days of the week are not favourable since some loss through deception is foreseen. Love affairs do not augur well. Those in business will do well. So translate plans into action, make changes and travel. Your health will improve and children in the family will make rapid progress. **Good dates:** 4, 5, 7 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 5 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



LEO (July 23 — August 22) This week there will be unexpected reverses and some unpleasant changes are forecast. Do not arouse the hostility of your employer. Avoid quarrels with your spouse. Accidents and illness threaten you and your family. Elders will cause anxiety. However, you will gain financially towards the weekend. **Good dates:** 3, 4 and 7. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 6 and 7. **Favourable directions:** East and West.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) You are liable to be disappointed in family, love and social matters. Although stellar portents are not very promising, some financial gains are forecast. A journey is on the cards. You will be rewarded for your initiative in industry. Try not to have differences of opinion with elders and those in authority. **Good dates:** 4, 5, 6 and 7. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 8 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) This will be a very successful and happy week for you. Do not allow your good fortune to lead to carelessness and error of judgement especially in your profession. Control your emotions. A romance is in the offing. **Good dates:** 2, 3 and 6. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 3. **Favourable directions:** East and North.



SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) Your capability of working hard, and initiative will bring you success. However, watch your finances carefully. Avoid speculation and keep away from legal matters. Refuse to take needless risks. An accident and loss of money is forecast. Deal tactfully with elders, employers and those in authority. This week is not favourable for health, love and marriage. **Good dates:** 2, 4, 5 and 6. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) This will be an eventful week in which there will be financial success and you will make many new friends. There might be sudden, unexpected disturbances in your domestic life most of which will be caused by female friends or relatives. However, businessmen will profit and employers will be helpful. **Good dates:** 2, 3, 5 and 6. **Lucky numbers:** 2 and 4. **Favourable direction:** South.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) You will gain help from a secret source. This week is favourable for courtship, marriage and travel. Utilise the opportunities which you will gain this week. Employers and relatives will help you. A legacy is forthcoming. Domestic and social activities are forecast. **Good dates:** 2, 3, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 7 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North.



AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) New friendships will bring happiness. However, your separation from a loved one will bring a touch of sadness. Beneficial changes and travel are forecast. Take care of yourself and elders in the family. A female relative may fall sick but will recover quickly. **Good dates:** 2, 4 and 6. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 8 and 10. **Favourable direction:** East.

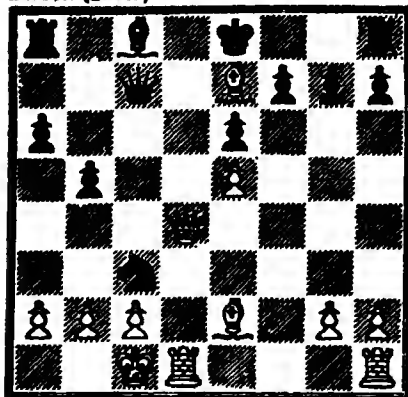


PISCES (February 20 — March 20) This week will pass normally and elders and young associates will contribute to your happiness. Forge ahead in all business dealings. Children and intellectuals will help you. Watch your finances carefully. Do not be led away by emotions. Love and marriage are in the offing. **Good dates:** 2, 3, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

M. B. RAMAN

chess

Larsen (Black)



Tal (White) to move

Position after Black's 14th move

Montreal 79

The grandmaster tournament held in Montreal this spring was very nearly the tournament to end all tournaments. I say very nearly because although the intention was to bring together all the strongest players in the world, as it turned out there were three rather conspicuous absentees, namely Fischer, Korchnoi and Mecking. The absence of Fischer and Mecking did not raise many eyebrows. Fischer has consistently turned down all attempts to bring him out of exile since his famous victory over Spassky in 1972, and Mecking, plagued by ill health, has also rarely been seen in public recently. The omission of Korchnoi however requires a more detailed explanation and I shall delve into this subject more deeply in next week's article.

Fischer, Korchnoi, Mecking or no, the event was dazzlingly strong. The average FIDE rating of the players was a staggering 2,620 (that's over 252 on the BCF scale), making the event the strongest for many, many years and arguably one of the strongest of all time. With such an army of talent collected together, there were bound to be some surprises in the final scoreline, as indeed there were: 1st= Karpov, Tal (USSR), 12 (out of 18); 3. Portisch (Hungary), 10; 4. Ljubojevic (Yugoslavia), 9; 5th= Spassky (USSR), Timman (Holland), 8; 7th= Hort (Czechoslovakia), Hubner (W. Germany) and Kavalek (USA), 8; 10th and last, believe it or not, Larsen (Denmark), 5.

The event was played as a double round all-play-all, and only Tal came through unbeaten. Larsen of course was the joker in the pack, tailed off in last place, but the only player to beat Karpov.

Tal's play was particularly impressive and I give as an illustration his annihilation of Larsen, whose provocative opening play this time proved to be his undoing.

White: M. Tal. Black: B. Larsen. Montreal 1979.

Sicilian Defence, Rauzer Attack.

1. P-K4, P-QB4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. P-Q4, P x P; 4. N x P, N-B3; 5. N-QB3, P-Q3; 6. B-KN5, P-K3; 7. Q-Q2, B-K2; 8. O-O-O, P-QR3; 9. P-B4, Q-B2? This move is common in many variations of the Sicilian Defence but is not known to theory in this position, which is probably exactly the reason why Larsen chose it. 10. B-K2, N x N; This and Black's next few moves seem to be based on an oversight, as indeed may be the whole conception of 9. . . . Q-B2? 11. Q x N, P-QN4; 12. P-K5, P x P; 13.

P x P, N-Q4; 14. B x B. Not 14. N x N, B x B check with advantage 14. . . . N x N. (DIAGRAM) And here if is. I suspect Black had intended to recapture 14. . . . N x B here, but realised too late that this loses to 15. N x P! P x N; 16. B x P+, K-B1; 17. Q-QB+ and mate next move. So Black is obliged to 'mix it' with his king still in the centre.

15. B-B3! An important finesse. If 15. P x N, Q x B; 16. B-B3, B-N2; Black is still very much alive.

15. . . . N x R? Fatal. He had to play 15. . . . N-K7+! 16. B x N, Q x B; 17. B-B3, B-N2;

16. B-Q4, Q-B5; 17. Q-N6! Now the black king is surrounded. There is no escape.

17. . . . N-B7; 18. B-B6+, B-Q2; 19. B x B+, K x B; 20. Q-N7+, K-Q1; 21. Q x R+, Q-B1; 22. Q-R7! Faced with the double threat of mate on K7 and the knight, Black resigned.

HARRY GOLOMBEK

bridge

THE CONVENTION known as the 'unusual notrump' has become distressingly usual. This is the sort of result it causes:

Dealer, East. E-W vulnerable.

♠ —	♥ Q 8 4	♦ K 10 8 6 3	♣ A J 9 5 2
♠ Q 8 4 2	♥ A 10 9 8 3	♦ 9 7 4	♣ K
N	E	S	W
♠ A K 9 7 8	♥ 2	♦ A Q 5 2	♣ 10 7 6

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♠	2NT	3♠	No
4♠	No	No	No

West's 2NT was typical of the breed. The only effect of intervening on such moderate values is to assist opponents in both bidding and play.

West led a low heart, covered by the Jack and Ace. East cashed ♣ K and returned a diamond, won by the Ace. South ruffed a diamond with ♠ J and cashed ♥ K. It was clear now that West, who was marked with ♥ Q x x, had 0-3-5-5 distribution. Having reached this conclusion, South finessed ♠ 7 on the first round and ruffed his last diamond with ♠ 10. This left:

♠ —	♥ 8	♦ 10 8	♣ A J 9
♠ 5	♥ 7 5	♦ —	♣ Q 8 4
N	E	S	W
♠ A K 9 6	♥ —	♦ —	♣ 10 7

After another spade finesse South was able to draw trumps and make a trick with the Queen of clubs. Well played, certainly, but quite impossible without the aid of West's revealing 2NT.

Can you see any defence after the first two tricks? Well, try the Queen of spades at trick 3! Then, after ruffing two diamonds, South has no trumps left in dummy. He must shorten himself with a heart ruff and cannot make a trick in clubs.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



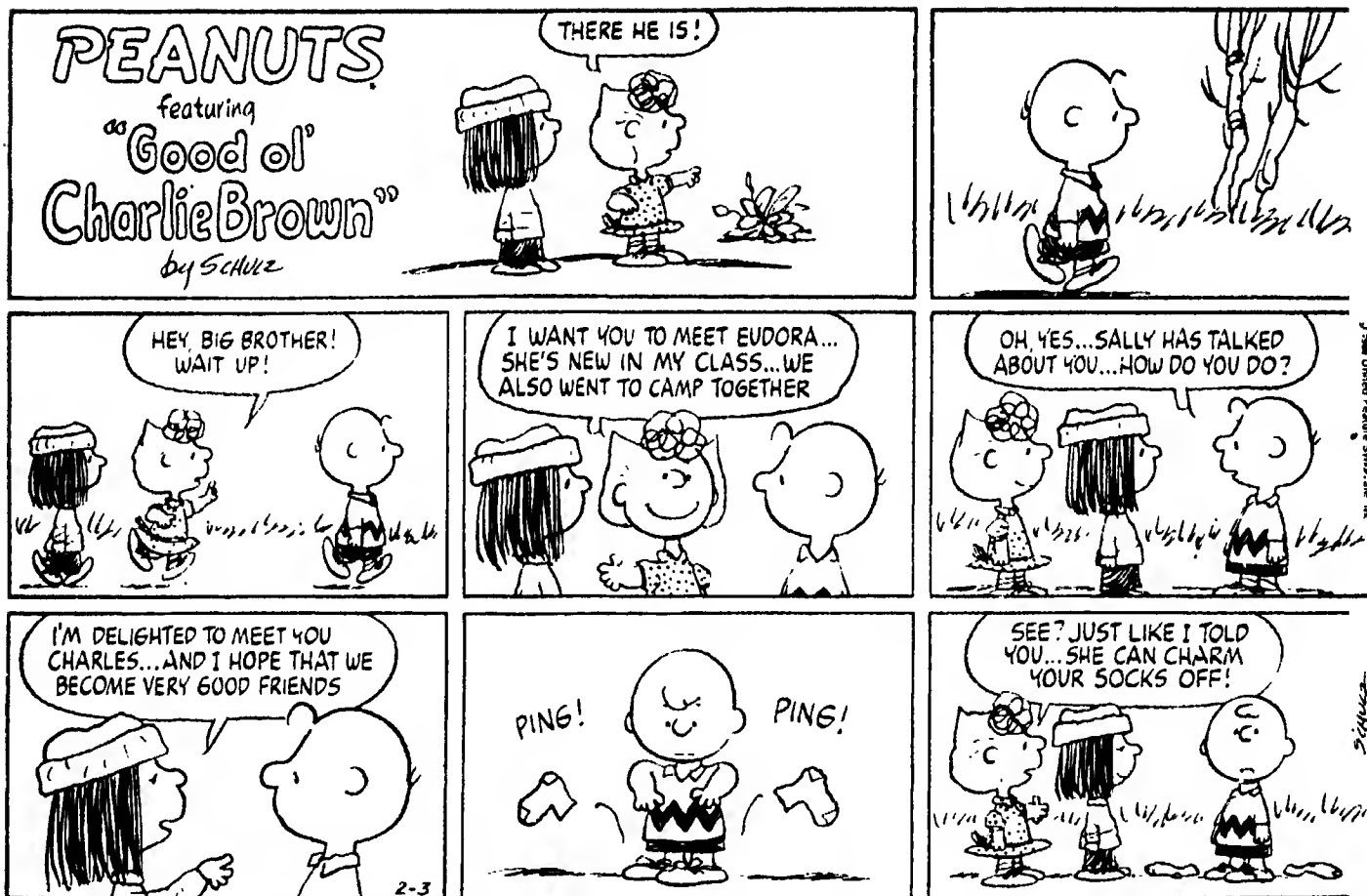
SWISS stamps are notable for their views of the country's splendid scenery. The first pictorials were three high values issued in 1914 and showing views of the Rütli, the twin peaks of the Mythen, and the Jungfrau with a peasant girl personifying Helvetia. The Jungfrau stamp, a 10-francs value, was reissued in 1930 and a mint example of this later issue realised £70 in a recent Phillips sale. Price rises recorded in the 1979 edition of 'The Stamp Catalogue of Switzerland' (The Amateur Collector Ltd, 132 pp., £4.40) reflect the continuing strength of the Swiss philatelic market. As well as normal Swiss postage stamps, the catalogue lists the issues of the various international agencies in Switzerland, including those of the United Nations office in Geneva.

The six stamps which marked the ill-fated disarmament conference held at Geneva in 1932 still cost less than £2 in used condition but a mint set is priced at £27 and the same stamps overprinted 'Société des Nations' for the League of Nations mail now cost £875 mint or £47 used.



IN March 1917, as the First World War dragged on, the Austrian Emperor Charles, fearful for his throne, tried to negotiate a separate peace between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Allies. He and his wife, the Empress Zita, held a secret meeting at Laxenburg Castle, near Vienna, with her brothers, the princes Sixte and Xavier of Bourbon-Parma, who acted as intermediaries for France. The negotiations came to nothing and in November 1918 both Austria and Hungary became republics. The Empress Zita was portrayed on three Hungarian stamps during her husband's brief reign. One marked their coronation in December 1916 and two were issued in 1918 for ordinary use. Some of the latter stamps were afterwards overprinted with the Magyar word for republic, KOZTARSASAG. None of these stamps are scarce, as many were bought cheaply during the 1920-21 inflation. Stanley Gibbons's 'Stamps of the World Catalogue' (1979 edition, 1,660 pp., £9.50) quotes them at between 5p and 15p each, mint or used.

C.W. HILL



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AHMEDABAD : Panic gripped the State police headquarters here when an armed constable fired off ten rounds from his rifle aiming at the eclipsed sun on February 16. The constable, Velji Laluji was on guard duty at the office of the Deputy Inspector-General (Arms and Training). Later during interrogation the constable reportedly said he was a devotee of Ramdev who had told him in dream to stop the eclipse. He opened fire at the eclipsed sun at 3.45 p.m.—*Indian Express* (M. Thomas Kadavan, Trivandrum)

JAIPUR : A forty-five-year-old woman, a resident of Nehari Ka Naka in Jaipur, has seen the mythological film, "Gopal Krishna", for 112 continuous days. According to Shantadevi, her god at home stands quietly, whereas the one in the film talks and moves about. She had seen another mythological film, "Santoshi Mata", continuously for one year — *Deccan Herald* (P. B. Kumar, Bangalore)

FARRUKHABAD : The district police faced some awkward moments here when two brothers, who were arrested in an alleged armed 'encounter' with the Suarikh police, turned out to be blind when produced before the Additional District Magistrate on February 9. A medical certificate authenticating their blindness by the jail doctor was produced before the court. The judge released on bail the alleged dacoits and has written to the Superintendent of Police for drastic action against the police official who 'concocted the encounter'. According to the police version, Shabir and Altaf — residents of village Kabirpur under Saurikh police circle — were arrested along with three others on the night of January 9-10 after an armed encounter and a hard chase. The police claimed to have recovered a country-made pistol along with four live cartridges — *Northern India Patrika* (R. S. Saxena, Kanpur)

JAIPUR : Jehangir's bell of justice tolled at the State secretariat here. Mr Tola Ram Upadhyaya, a clerk in the Education Department at Bikaner, taking a cue from the Mughal Emperor, has fixed a small bell in front of the Secretariat here and has been constantly ringing it since yesterday (February 8) in the hope that it would ring in the ears of the Chief Minister and the Education Minister. Mr Upadhyaya wants them to cancel his transfer order. He has also written down his grievance on two blackboards placed near the bell. Mr Upadhyaya is under order of transfer from Bikaner, his home town, to Ganganagar. The order according to him, has caused him hardship and he wants it to be rescinded. Persistent in his efforts he will continue to ring the bell until "justice is done", he says — *Sunday Standard* (Alok Kumar Gupta, Bhopal)

JAIPUR : Lala Ram Bhagaram and Monan residents of Pali, were fined Rs 500 each for arranging a death feast. If they do not deposit the fine they will have to undergo three months' rigorous imprisonment. The Civil Supplies Department conducted a raid during the death feast and seized the foodstuffs. They auctioned 600 kilograms of prepared sweets on the spot — *Indian Express* (Priyanath Rufus, Vizianagaram)

NEW DELHI : The teachers and parents of some of the students in the Delhi Administration-run Government Co-educational Higher Secondary School, Vivek Vihar, are engaged in a battle of nerves over what one of the parents has termed the "broom-stick scare". According to Mr P. S. Goyal, vice-president of the Parents-Teachers Association of the school all the 35 students of class VIII A including girls were given a sound beating with a broom-stick by one of the teachers on February 5, because the teacher wanted to teach them a lesson for making noise. Ever since some of the students due to fright have not attended class. When the vice-president of the PTA went to the principal to take up the matter he was reportedly told that "beating" was normal in government schools. Mr Goyal did not agree with this practice as being 'normal' and went to the nearest police station to lodge a report. There he was told that since the beating had not resulted in any fracture or injury it could not be considered a cognizable offence. He wrote to the Delhi Administration but got no 'reply'. So he sent a representation to the Prime Minister, requesting that the matter be looked into — *The Times of India* (A. D. Nirai Selvan, Rourkela)

DEFECTIONS are there. We have to live with it—Swaran Singh, after joining Congress (I).

WE are dealing with the legislators as priority commodity to change the situation—Yashpal Kapoor

WE have done only what the Janata Government did in 1977. What is important is the democratic process, not personal views —Zail Singh, on the dissolution of nine State Assemblies

LET Mr Basu ask his Party to stop opposing the Congress (I) and I shall reciprocate in West Bengal —A. B. A. Ghani Khan Choudhury

WE are really happy—M. G. Ramachandran's reaction to the dissolution of nine State Assemblies, including Tamil Nadu's

BLESSED are the loyal Congress (I) men/For they shall inherit the cabinet—Onlooker

THE Press I think has a record of very irresponsible journalism. The height of their irresponsibility can be measured by their initial attempt to brand me as a goonda —Kamal Nath, Congress (I) MP

IF Mrs Gandhi's speech to the nation on January 14 is any indication, she has learnt something from her experience...Her language was sober. She was not hysterical, which in itself is a great change—Chandra Shekhar, Janata Party president

ARMS could fire in any direction —Abdul Sattar, Pakistani ambassador to India quoted in *Delhi Recorder*

WHEN Janata Government disappeared, sugar disappeared with it—headline in *Organiser*

MAYBE what Sanjay says today, she (Mrs Gandhi) will say tomorrow—E. M. S. Namboodiripad

THIS is not the first abuse of Soviet power, nor will it be the last...We cannot afford a foreign policy based on the pangs of unrequited love — Senator Edward Kennedy quoted in *Time*

I DO not think that any non-politician could have done better than I did...My African trip could have been better, but it was still good—Muhammad Ali

IT'S he who is getting publicity—Film actress Sarika on her reported affair with Kapil Dev

WHO NEXT ?

CNS



Pranab Mukherjee

WHO will be the Secretary to the Prime Minister? Among the many names on the grapevine, the most prominent is that of K. P. A. Menon, an IAS officer belonging to the West Bengal cadre. Menon was the Additional Secretary in the Finance Ministry in charge of Banking and Insurance during the tenure of Pranab Mukherjee as the Banking Minister. If Menon is appointed, then it will be another indication of the proximity of the pipe-smoking politician from West Bengal to the Prime Minister.

SECRETARIAL SHUFFLE

AN air of uncertainty prevails in the corridors of power in New Delhi. All the Planning Commission members who were asked to resign by the new Government were told on the morning of February 15 that they should leave by lunchtime that day. Some of them had fixed meetings for the day, but on receiving marching orders, packed up their bags and left without any fanfare. A major reshuffle in the portfolios of the Secretaries is expected soon. While the new Government has not rushed the departure of the Cabinet Secretary, Nirmal Kumar Mukherjee, he will be relieved of his post in March, it is learnt. His post may be taken either by Mr Dave, the envoy to Brussels, or B. B. Vohra, the IAS officer who was arrested by the Janata Government in connection with the CFP deal. Among other new faces in the top hierarchy may be the former EPI chairman, Mohammad Fazal, who is tipped to be the Industries

Secretary. Fazal was relieved of his post in the EPI by the Janata regime. The Coal India Chairman, R. N. Sharma, is likely to take over as the Steel Secretary from Mantosh Sondhi, who is reported to have fallen out of favour with the new regime. It may be recalled that Sondhi, a former chairman of Bokaro Steel, was one of the first non-IAS technocrats to be appointed a Secretary at the Centre in the early Seventies. At that time he was given the Heavy Industries portfolio and the cause of his present trouble lies in that period of his career.

SILENT SCHEME

IN mid-February newspaper reports regarding a move to retire Government servants at the age of 55 caused a great deal of concern. Though the Union Government promptly denied the report, it is reliably learnt that the Centre is actually toying with the idea. The main attraction is that around three lakh jobs can immediately be created if the employees in the lower rungs, who have attained the age of 55 years, are retired. The credit for creating so many extra jobs within a year then can be taken by the new Government. The employees' financial interests, like gratuity and pension, will be protected by the new scheme. If the plan materialises, then many Joint Secretaries in their middle or late forties can look forward to becoming Secretaries long before their expected date of promotion.

MODERATOR

CNS



Shiv Shankar

UNION Law Minister Shiv Shankar has reportedly earned the wrath of the hardliners in the Congress (I), particularly the younger elements. These elements wanted the Congress (I) Government to take all the drastic steps, like the dissolution of State Assemblies, withdrawal of

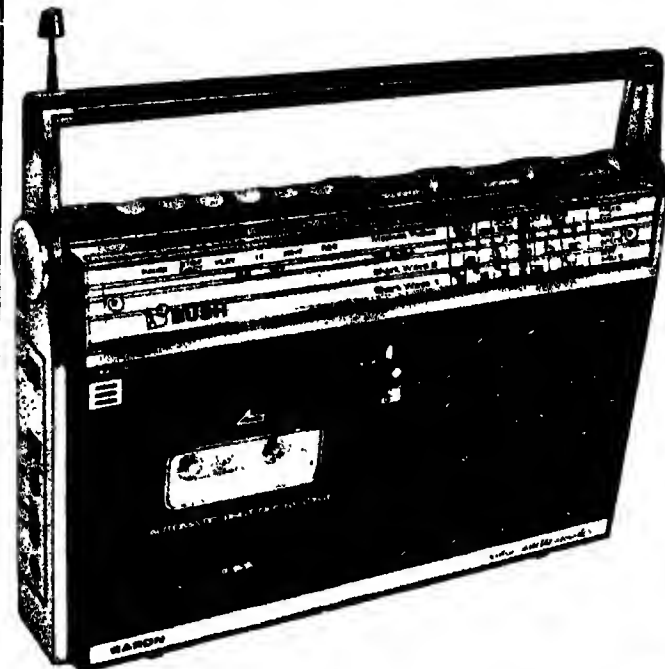
cases and the scrapping of the Special Courts soon after the poll results. But the new Law Minister, who had supervised Mrs Gandhi's defence before the Special Courts prior to the elections, advised the PM against taking hasty steps. The hardliners feel that the delay of one month in taking the crucial decisions has changed the situation. The Law Minister, on the other hand, insists that it has not. But the hardliners point out that as time passes, the euphoria of the post-election period will fade out and the Government will have to face many hurdles, like the one regarding the ratification of the Constitutional Amendment extending the reservation of seats in Parliament and the legislatures for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

SUPREMELY LINKED

THE Supreme Court has linked the fate of two politicians—Chaudhury Bansil Lal, the Congress (I) strongman from Haryana and George Fernandes, the firebrand Lok Dal leader. The criminal prosecutions launched against both by regimes opposed to them were withdrawn due to political decisions. George Fernandes's prosecution in the Baroda Dynamite Case was dropped soon after the Janata came to power in March, 1977 and the cases against Bansil Lal were withdrawn by Haryana Chief Minister Bhajan Lal long before Bhajan Lal joined the Congress (I). The withdrawal of cases against both these leaders have been separately challenged before the Supreme Court and they both came up for hearing before Justices V. R. Krishna Iyer and R. S. Pathak on February 12. The judges have linked up the two cases because they involve similar legal points and the hearing for the appeals has been slaved for March 11. Interestingly, the reason for the court postponing the hearing till March was that both the petitioners reported that they had not been able to serve notices on the respondents, who include Bansil Lal, his son Surinder Singh, George Fernandes, journalists Vikram Rao and C. G. K. Reddy, and Rajya Sabha member Laddi Mohan Nigam. The petition against Bansil Lal has been filed by Manohar Lal of Bhiwani and that against George Fernandes by an advocate from Indore, Rajinder Kumar Jain.

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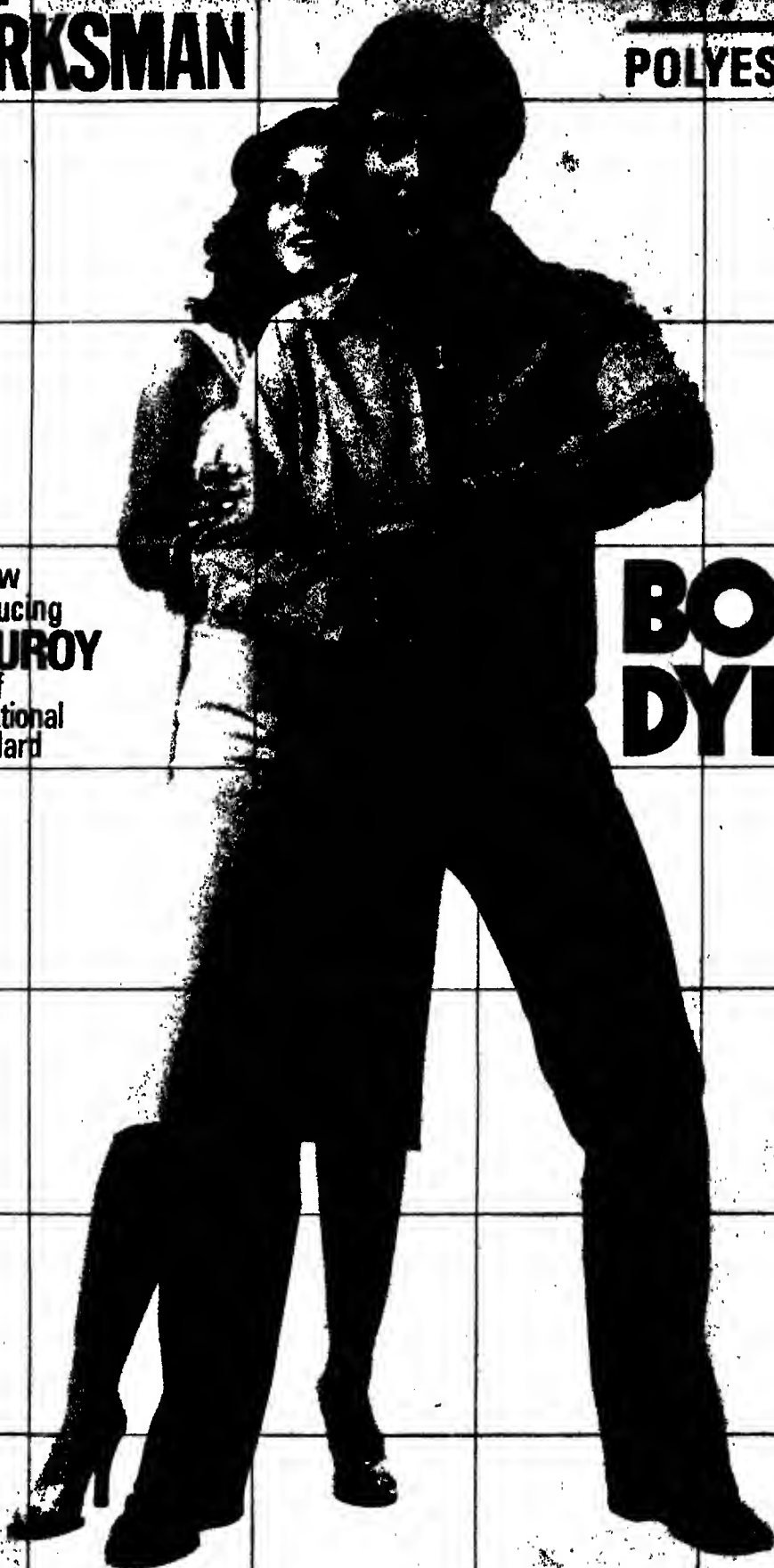
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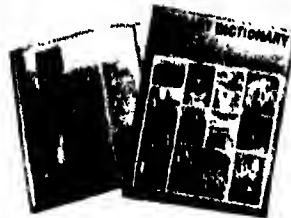
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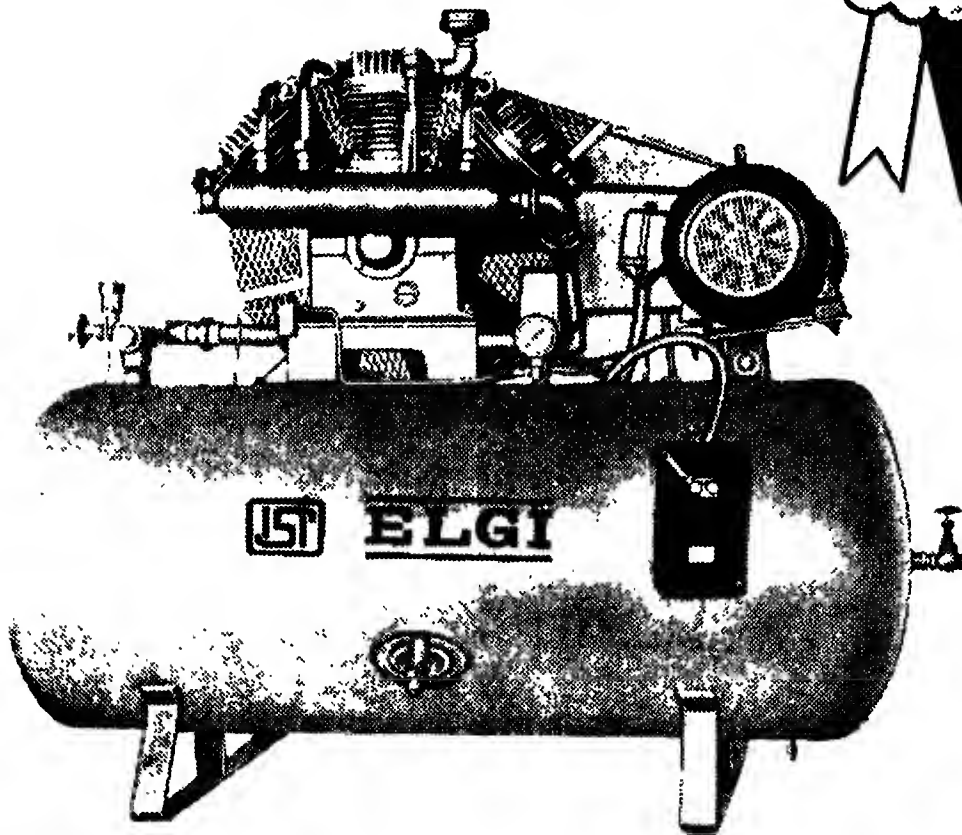
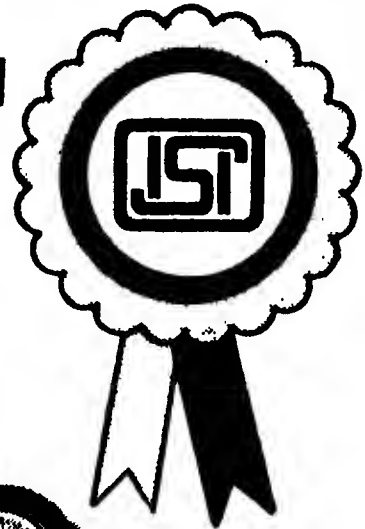


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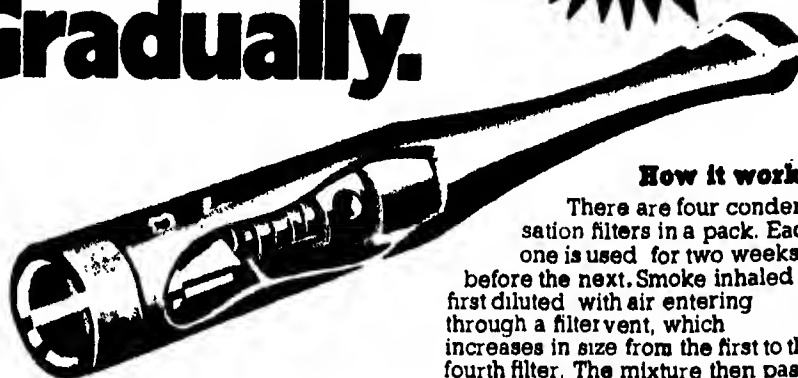
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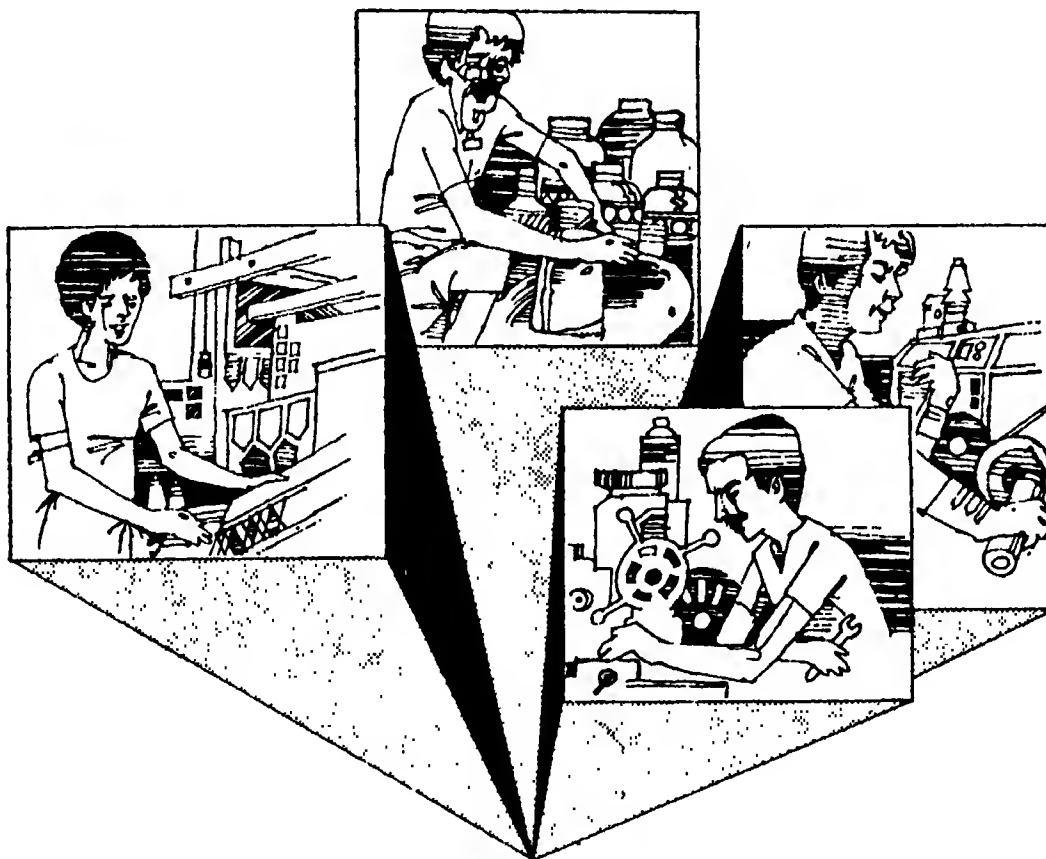
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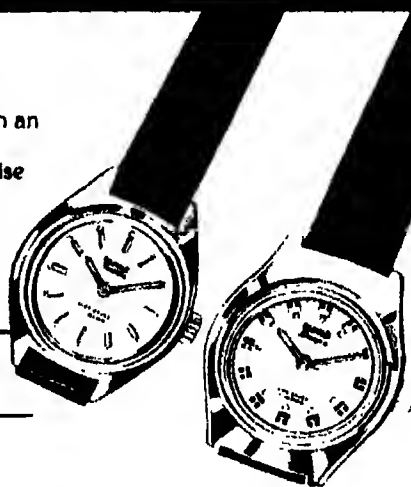
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On the night of February 25, armed men attacked the village of Pipra. The one-sided battle lasted six hours. Dawn saw 13 harijans dead and one more succumbed to his injuries later. In the carnage the victims had been shot, hacked to pieces and thrown into the flaming remains of their huts. The harijan-kurmi conflict has roots in economic exploitation and the harijans' attempt to seek a violent solution to their misery.

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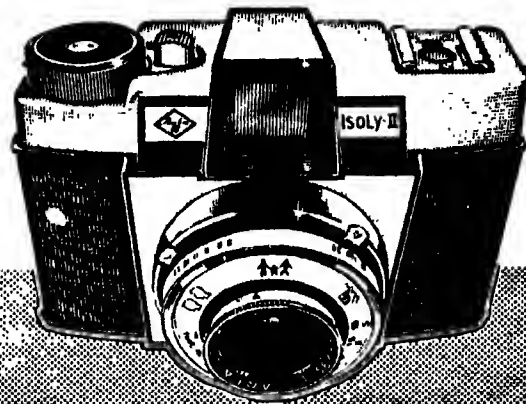
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Troilokya Bhattacharya, Haflong

THANK you for publishing "Assam's Challenge". We appreciate Subir Roy's impartial report on the Assam situation which is unlike the work of some other newsmen, especially from Calcutta, who report like the spokesmen of a particular linguistic group instead of exposing the real picture. Indeed SUNDAY has gone a long way in revealing the true nature of the agitation in Assam, which is against the undeclared invasion of our motherland by foreigners.

Gauri Prasad Bezborah, Gauhati

SUBIR Roy's unbiased report deserves praise from all communities. But one thing he has not mentioned is that the violence started in Assam from January 2 this year. When it became clear that elections would be held in two constituencies of Assam. In the oil town of Digboi, where I permanently reside, we spent sleepless nights since January 2. Though we are genuine Indians living in Assam since 1943, we were threatened throughout the night. The All Assam Students Union and All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad have several times declared that this movement is not against any Indian community but against foreign na-

tionists. But this movement totally removed its mask from January 2 and its real communal and secessionist face became clear to us. The Bengali community was their main target. They did not care whether a Bengali-speaking person was a Hindu, Muslim or Christian. Will AASU and AAGSP clarify why Indian citizens were harassed, why their small shops were burnt? I know they will say that the untoward incidents were the work of miscreants. But, we cannot assume almost 80 per cent of a community consists of miscreants. Rather it is rational to think that these 80 per cent are peace-loving people misguided by some fascist leaders and organisations.

As regards CRP, BSF and army atrocities I would like to mention that the allegations may be partially true. But what is wholly correct is that, had the CRP and the army not been called out, the minorities would have perished. Many untoward incidents, even after the curfew, were possible because the civil authorities did not co-operate with the army and CRP.

Genuine foreigners must be deported. But even then one is not entitled to kill a foreigner. The secessionist elements are active in the whole north-eastern region. The progressive Assamese people are today severely beaten up by the reactionaries. No community is communal. But the opportunistic leaders and organisations are today exploiting the sentiments of every community. Secularism appears to have become a joke. Those political parties or persons preaching secularism are outcasts in this region. What the new Central Government will do remains to be seen. We await a permanent solution and don't like to lose our honour, peace and property once every decade.

Prateep Sen Gupta, Digboi

Congratulations for a bold cover story. The report itself is neither prejudicial nor a one-sided affair as the one in another magazine wherein the 'Hate Bengali' campaign now going on in the north-east was not mentioned. It is now clear from the report what the ulterior motives behind the agitation are.

Sikha Ghosh, New Delhi

PERHAPS it would have been a bit wise for Subir Roy to have mentioned a little about the happenings at Lumding, Halakandi, Karimganj, Tinsukia, Nankatia and in the entire Cachar district. May I ask him why he is keeping silent about the secessionist activities of the most hated group, Amra Bangali, in Assam? He should remember what happened in Marichhapi. Before drawing the last conclusion, "but whose economic consequences the Centre will have to

bear," he should examine Assam's economic situation. If the entire *bahinagals* presently in Assam could be driven out then there would not be any economic problem in Assam and it could become a most affluent and surplus state.

R. C. Sharma, Mangaldai.

MY attention has been drawn to the news published in SUNDAY regarding Dr Anjan Chakravarty's death. First of all, the incident took place on December 11-12 midnight. My son, who was the roommate of Dr Chakravarty, told me that so far as he could remember the incident of that fateful night in the Gauhati Medical College Hostel, there was no knock on his door at midnight at all. At about midnight my son was proceeding towards the toilet, but in the corridor of the hostel he was suddenly attacked by some unknown miscreants and he fell unconscious. After regaining consciousness, he shouted "Anjan, Anjan" for his own help and later on he and the injured Anjan were shifted to the hospital with the help of others. The author deserves thanks for mentioning the incident.

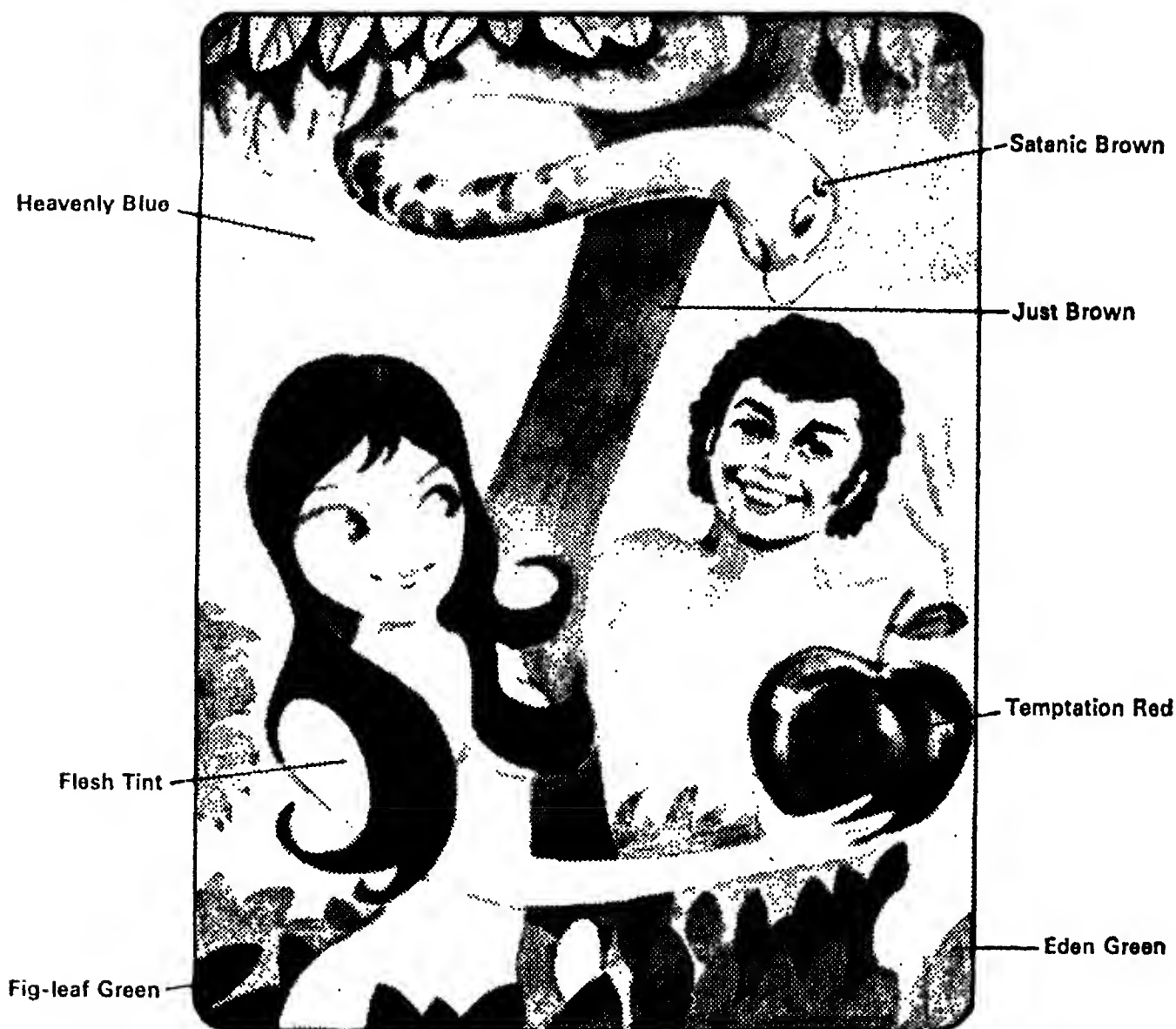
Mrs Shantilata Bhattacharjee, Silchar.

SUBIR Roy's coverage appears to be a mere compilation of statements of a Government which for the last six months is at the mercy of the students, Sangram Parishad and hooligans. This is why the account has become a half-truth. He gave details of para-military brutality but as far as brutality of the students was concerned, he merely said: "38 people had died, over 2,000 houses were burnt, over 500 arrested and over 10,000 people were in refugee camps". Why did he try to suppress the fact that the Nalbari-Barpeta area was calm till December 31. On that day the Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup along with other police officials and student leaders like Prafulla Mohanta visited the area and since then murmurs were heard against the holding of elections in Cachar district. On the day elections were being held at Karimganj constituency the students, on the plea of collecting subscriptions, started the troubles. As a result many people were killed between January 4 and 7. Obviously these mass killings were a revenge against the holding of elections in Karimganj on January 3.

Immediately after the incident the Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup was transferred. An Assamese writer, Mrs Nirupama Borgohain, after visiting the villages described the details of the brutalities in an Assamese weekly, *Saptahik Kolakar*, dated January 26. Had Subir Roy gone through the articles he would have paused a while before writing that the movement people were neither communal nor parochial.

Tapan Das, Goalpara.

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YOUR cover story is incomplete without a full report on the concurrent riot in Cachar district. Your story suffers from factual inaccuracy when Muslim votes of Cachar district are described as 'immigrant', the chunk of which the Congress (I) reportedly received. Similarly, the story of 'char' land—otherwise important in the issue—received virtually no coverage at all. It seems nobody in your editorial department cared to give such a vital story a research-oriented touch.

On what ground has the Bengali in Assam come to be viewed and as a "great chauvinist himself" and how and when has the Bengali tried to suppress the Assamese language? It was not the Bengali who had been ruling India, including Assam, prior to August 15, 1947. It was not the sin of the forefathers of the Bengalis that they were born to their parents in Sylhet district or in outlying native-Bengali zones in Assam and their descendants today should not regret this ruefully.

B. B. Taron, Secretary General, International Status and Recognition for East Pakistan Refugees in Dandakaranya, Kondagao, MP.

In this report Subir Roy, while describing the incidents in Nalbari district mentions the local residents as Assamese Hindus, Bengali Hindus and immigrant Muslims. Thus he leads us to believe that Bengali Hindus are not immigrants and immigrant Muslims are not Bengalis. He must know well that both are wrong. Both Hindus and Muslims, under reference, had migrated from the same place. Then why cannot these Muslims be identified as Bengali? Is the cultural identity 'Bengali' reserved for Bengali Hindus only? Subir Roy informs later that the Muslims have long settled there. But he still calls them "immigrant" while he avoids this word in the case

of Bengali Hindus, who had migrated much later. The author finds Bengali Hindu chauvinism in Assam, but one may also find it in him. The way he treats the Muslims of Nalbari is in line with the RSS which has long been trying to identify only Muslims as immigrants in Assam and thus give the movement of Assam a communal orientation. Dilip Paul, Calcutta.

Subir Roy has very nicely projected the true face of the current agitation in Assam. But while discussing "Mrs Gandhi's options" he has made a serious mistake by stating that "she (Mrs Gandhi) has received a big chunk (of votes) of the latter (immigrant Muslims) which enabled the Congress (I) to win both seats in Cachar". I would like to inform Subir Roy that before 1947 Cachar was inhabited by Muslims, Cacharis, Manipuris, Biharis (tea garden labourers) and a few Bengali Hindus belonging mostly to the backward classes. Therefore, it is wrong to say that Muslims of Cachar are "immigrant". It is the Bengali Hindus who had migrated from East Pakistan (Bangladesh) after 1950 and more so after 1970, forming the majority at present.

Muhamun Mazumdar, Silchar.

Subir Roy replies: *I was converted to the usage "immigrant Muslims" while touring Nalbari where I found that every section of people had adopted it. Also, while the Muslims there had virtually stopped speaking Bengali, the Bengali Hindu had not given up his linguistic identity as much. I thought the use of "immigrant Muslim" would highlight the tragedy of a people who had integrated so well. Of course the Bengali Hindu is also an immigrant. But the usage should not have been extended to Cachar. That was careless and I apologise.*

who needs his continuous doctoring through the prescription of prayer? I would suggest that Ali, who has retired as the greatest boxer and is now striving to become the greatest humanist, could only achieve his goal by becoming the greatest rationalist. He should try to knock down the divisive forces of caste, community, religion, language, and nationality.

S. A. Veevapandian, Thanjavur.

THE feature on Muhammad Ali, the boxing superstar, was superb. It is indeed sad that sports-loving Calcuttans missed seeing him. But we hope he will come back in the near future to this very homely city. From the articles I get the impression that he has changed a lot. He has shed his rough and tough image and donned the one of a jovial family man. But at Press conferences he can still sting like a bee. That was proved by his performance in Delhi.

Soulik Biswas, Calcutta.

Creditable

IT was indeed highly creditable for your magazine to highlight the historic discovery of a new protein by Indian biochemists at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology in Hyderabad (February 3). It is very unfortunate that the Western Press has shown total disregard for the work done by Indian scientists in this regard and it is shocking to note that the name of Mr E. Shyam Prasad Reddy was not mentioned in their Press release. This young scientist is responsible for the discovery of the protein.

O. Divakar Reddy, New Delhi.

YOUR heading "An unusual CSIR lab was apt in more senses than one. The difference between the CCMB and other CSIR laboratories is not just in the work they do but in recruitment also. At the CCMB proper criteria are adhered to in matters of recruitment whereas in many other CSIR institutions it is a farce and every appointment is politicised. And the CSIR authorities are encouraging this.

P. C. Mahapatra, Regional Research Laboratory, Bhubaneswar.

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I, Bappaditya Roy, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
1 March 1980.

Bappaditya Roy

Publisher

1 March 1980.

Rev. Ali

MUHAMMAD Ali on "Prayer" (February 3) was most impressive. He has unfolded the philosophy of prayer in a vivid and interesting manner. The subject is not new to us but Ali's simplicity of expression has made it worth reading. Philosophical thoughts on such a subject could not have been put more simply. He has rightly observed that consciousness of the existence of God checks crimes and brutality in the world. Not only in the rest of the world but in India also a majority these days proudly proclaim that it does not believe in God. Ali's humility in declaring that he is no longer the Greatest further strengthens his message. S. Narasimha Rao, Paradeep Port.

WHEN Muhammad Ali says that "the praise of God is the prescription for man", does it mean that God has created man as his patient

CAN MRS GANDHI STOP RISING PRICES?

COVER STORY

By KEWAL VARMA

KING Canute ordered the tides to recede. But they didn't. Prices also didn't respond to Mrs Gandhi's return to power. They continue to rise as they did during the non-governance period of the Janata and the Lok Dal. Psychology plays an important part in the price rise. Obviously, this Government's first eight weeks belied the expectations (or fear) that there was a return of a strong Government in the matter of economic management of the country. The initial impact lasted a week or two. Traders, hoarders and producers soon returned to the law of the jungle in fixing prices. They also realised that the Preventive Detention Act which was the first law enacted by Mrs Gandhi upon her return to power was a mere paper tiger. People are beginning to lose confidence in the capacity of Mrs Gandhi's Government to hold the price line.

If the battle is lost on the psychological front, then the price rise is always more than warranted by economic factors which are inherent in capitalist economies, where profit and money are everything. All the leading capitalist countries are afflicted with inflation. Here is a specimen of what the foreign Press carried in the last one week. "The financial markets have been regis-



tering their deepening fears that the US could now be facing not months but years of close to double digit inflation." "Inflation jumps to 21.4 per cent in Italy." "The annual rate of retail price inflation in the UK jumped sharply last month, and now appears to be heading for a peak of at least 20 per cent by the early summer." "Japan's inflation rate is showing signs that evoke memories of 1974, when consumer prices leaped 24 per cent in a single year."

Milton Friedman, a Nobel laureate and currently the world's most influential economist, draws a parallel between alcoholism and inflation. He says: "The drunker enjoys his liquor. He finds it hard to accept that he really is alcoholic, he is not sure he wants to take the cure. The inflationary nation is in the same position." Friedman brings out the inner contradiction of capitalism when he analyses why an inflationary nation does not take to cure. He says: "Many of us enjoy inflation. We would naturally like to see the price of the things we buy go down or at least stop going up. But we are more than happy to see the prices of the things we sell go up. Whether goods we produce, our labour services, or houses or other items we own. One reason inflation is so destructive is because some people benefit greatly while other people suffer, society is divided into winners and losers."

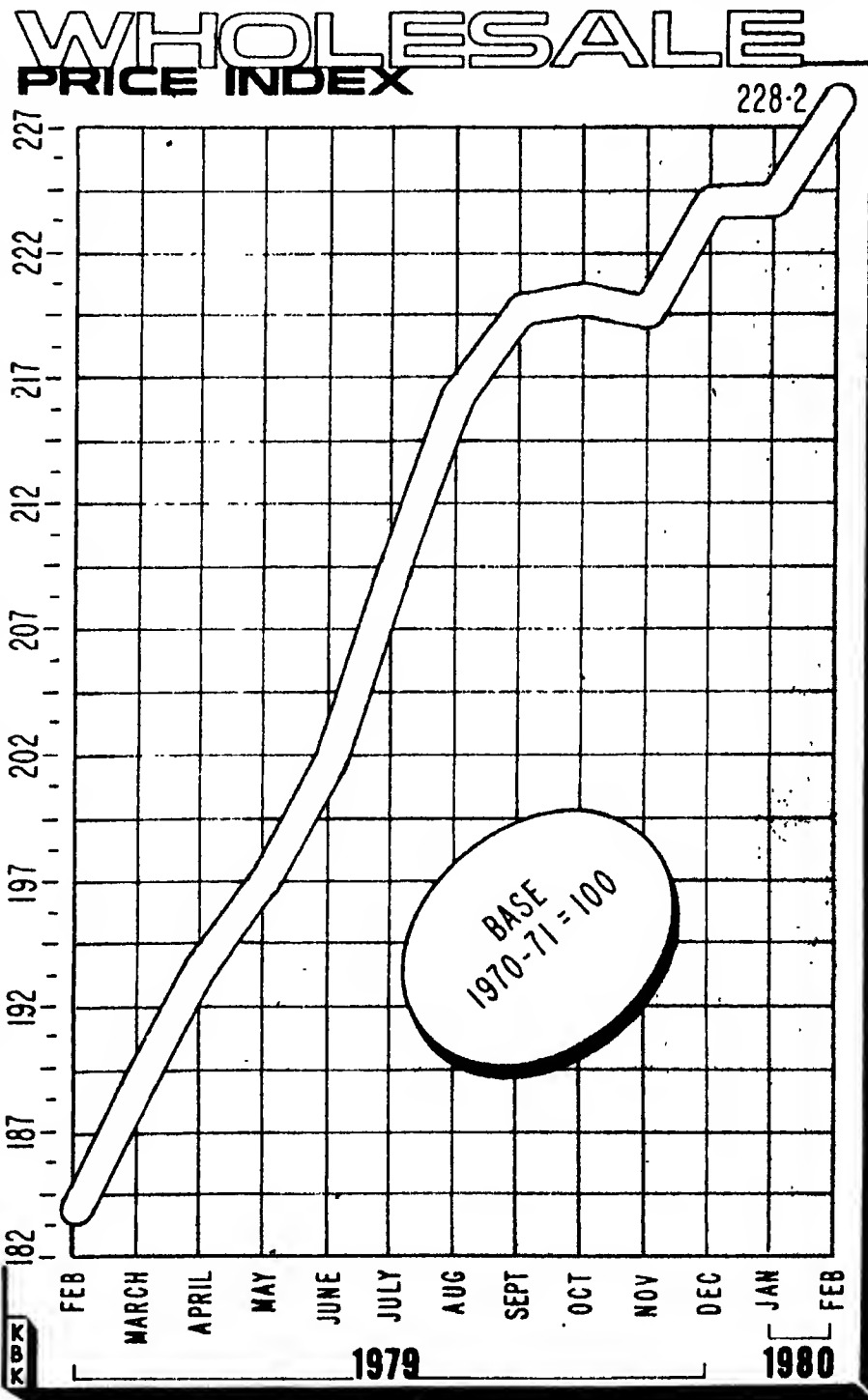
We all know that manufacturers, surplus agricultural producers, traders, commission agents, and property-owners all make hay while the inflationary sun shines. They have a vested interest in inflation. Whenever the objective economic situation is even mildly conducive to generating inflationary pressure, they will put all political levers to aggravate the situations. They also provide the political support base of all the major three political parties—Congress (I), Janata and Lok Dal. Take the case of sky-rocketing prices of sugar. Cane growers, the sugar industry and traders have made common cause to raise sugar prices and all the three parties have connived at it.

It was during the Janata raj that a Cabinet sub-committee under Babu Jagjivan Ram, who was being paraded as the country's ablest administrator, decided in 1978 to decontrol sugar. Sound economic reasoning was against it. In a sensitive agricultural commodity, whose production is subject to sharp fluctuation, it is most diabolical to resort to decontrol without building up an adequate buffer-stock. Who reaped the bumper harvest of the decision, we all know. After the Janata, came Charan Singh. What did he do? He tailored the policies in such a manner as to ensure a three-fold or even four-fold increase in sugarcane prices. Charan Singh was followed by Mrs. Gandhi. So far her Government has been making empty promises and

giving empty threats. Even the talk of nationalisation of the sugar industry did not scare anybody. Sugar continues to remain scarce, fair price shops empty and its open market prices prohibitive.

THERE is no doubt that objective conditions today are most favourable for inflation. There has been a set-back in agricultural production due to drought, and short-fall in industrial production due to

man-made causes. Why should capacity utilisation of thermal power stations fall to about 40 per cent from 58 per cent when hydel reservoirs are drying up because of inadequate rains? Why should production of coal decline when imported diesel, kerosene and other fuel are getting costlier and more scarce? Why should the railways not fully utilise their capacity when carrying by road is more costly? There is no satisfactory reply to these questions



except that there has been a collapse of the discipline ethos in the country. Alas, even Mrs Gandhi's magic touch in this regard is not yet felt. There are no signs of an industrial pick up. But when there is a short fall in production and shortages, the inflationary impact can be neutralised to a great extent if there are efficient controls and a strong public distribution system. Earlier, sugar and edible oil were the two pillars of the public distribution system. But during the Janata raj, both these items were taken away from the public distribution system, sugar abruptly and edible oils gradually. As a result consumers were left high and dry. Mrs Gandhi's commitment to the public distribution system is also skin deep. In the past she was influenced to take some decisions in this regard by people like P. N. Haksar, D. P. Dhar, Mohan Kumaramangalam and C. Subramaniam who had a deep political commitment to the public distribution system. Also, since Mrs Gandhi believes in ensuring support from all sections and classes and Assembly elections are round the corner she will not take any harsh administrative steps against producers and traders which may bring even temporary relief on the price front.

Problems created by shortfall in domestic production get accentuated by what is called imported inflation. As stated earlier, all capitalist countries are groaning under inflation. As a result, whatever we import is becoming costlier and costlier. In fact, in most cases domestic prices

are lower than imported prices. The long-term answer is to produce as much as possible indigenously and insulate the economy, as much as possible, from the impact of world-wide inflation. So long as there is a need to import, no Government will be able to do anything about imported inflation. For instance, in some spot deals diesel is being bought at Rs. 3.50 per litre but it is being sold at about Rs. 1.50 per litre. How long can such a situation continue? It is possible to subsidise a particular commodity but this leads to inflationary price rise of other commodities. The total burden of subsidies on certain petroleum products, fertilisers and foodgrains is over Rs. 1,600 crores per annum. But other commodities must be bearing more than double the burden of this in the form of increased prices.

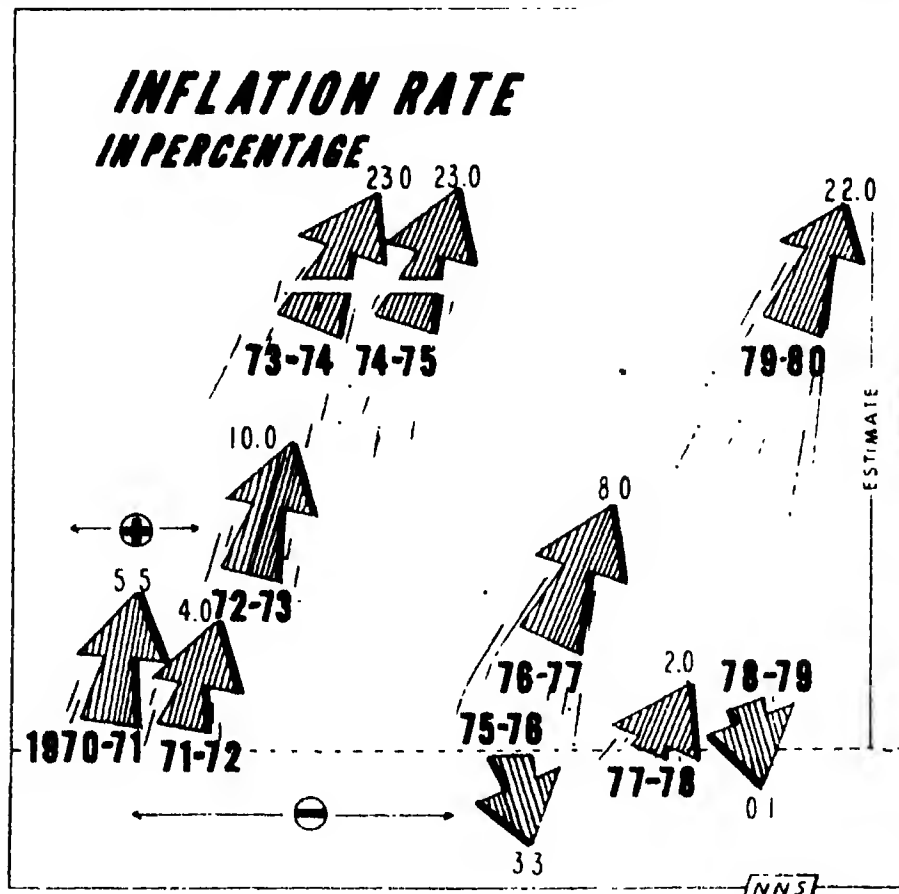
Some economists believe that the real villain of the piece is the rapidly increasing money supply. In fact, Milton Friedman is of the view that "in the modern world, inflation is a printing press phenomenon". Admittedly the Nasik Printing Press is the most efficient public sector unit in the country. As a result the money supply has been expanding much faster—more than double—than the increase in material production in the last ten years. In 1970-71 if Re 1 was chasing a unit of domestic production and services available to the public, in 1979-80 as much as Rs. 2.07 is chasing the same unit of production and services. No wonder, the wholesale prices index in this period increased from 100 to 225. It can be

seen that traders and imported inflation have also made their contribution.

One chief reason of excessive money supply is that the Government has been following a soft policy towards resources mobilisation to meet its increasing expenditure. The high water-mark of this soft or rather irresponsible approach was witnessed during the Emergency. In the 1976-77 budget which bore the imprint of Mr. Sanjay Gandhi's thinking, there was actually demobilisation rather than mobilisation of resources. The additional taxation levied was of only Rs. 80 crores. Everybody was happy. But the happiness was short-lived. Price stability, which was claimed to be one of the major gains of the Emergency, was lost. The price rise resumed and in 1976-77 the wholesale price index rose by over 12 per cent.

Despite Mr. Morarji Desai's purist views, the Janata soon started pursuing the "Caucus" economic policies without the "Caucus". As a result of Mr. H. M. Patel's 1978 budget, the total budgetary deficit of the Centre in 1978-79 was nearly Rs. 1,600 crores. No wonder prices started rising from February 1979. It was Mr. Charan Singh's ill-luck that his appointment as Finance Minister coincided with this. It is also true that instead of salvaging the situation, Charan Singh aggravated it by an ill-thought-out and highly partisan budget.

There are suggestions that the easy way to curb inflation is to cut drastically the public sector plan expenditure. There are many who have never reconciled themselves to the growth of the public sector. They are always on the lookout for an opportunity to axe the public sector. Inflation always provides them with such an opportunity. This may provide some short-term relief but it will disturb the balance between the private sector and the public sector as well as restrict the growth of job opportunities. This amounts to mortgaging the future. The other way to curb inflation is to resort to a wage freeze and depress the prices of agricultural produce. It is not a coincidence that in the last decade the relative price stability was achieved only in those years when the terms of trade moved against agriculture. The years are 1971-72, 1975-76, 1977-78 and 1978-79. Poor farmers still remember the days when they had to sell their potatoes at 10 paise a kg and sugarcane at Rs. 2 per quintal. Particularly in a year of bumper production the Government can gang up with wholesalers and operate the instruments of credit, pricing policies and import-export policies in such a manner as to depress the prices of agricultural produce. It is also possible to make an impact on the inflationary situation through a policy of wage freeze as Mrs. Gandhi did in 1974. But the past experience shows that the effect of all such measures is very short-lived. Inflation is a curse of capitalism and Mrs. Gandhi has no power to change it.



A big price to pay

THE scourge of rising prices which Mrs Indira Gandhi has so successfully used to drive out the previous Government, could easily threaten to boomerang on the Gandhi Government itself.

The rampant inflation which had gripped the country was the main election platform for Mrs Gandhi. People, particularly the urban and rural poor were ready to forget about the Emergency and its excesses, essentially because Mrs Gandhi promised that if she came to power, she would see to it that prices are kept at bay.

In fact, soon after she came to power, prices did drop slightly and members of the ruling party triumphantly declared that inflation had once again been conquered and Mrs Gandhi's promises had been honoured. By the middle of January, however, prices started climbing again and in the case of some items like sugar mounted sharply. On 21 February, the Finance Ministry announced that, compared to prices in the same period last year, the prices in the first week of February had registered a 22.9 per cent rise. The Ministry also admitted that in one month alone of the Mrs Gandhi Government, prices have had an overall increase of 0.7 per cent.

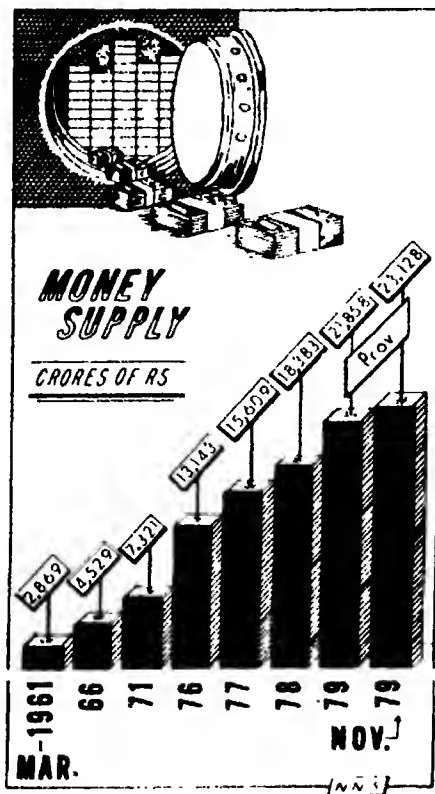
The Ministry announcement related only to wholesale prices. In retail stores all over the country consumers were faring much worse. Many commodities had gone up by anything from 10 to 50 per cent. And in the vegetable markets, irate buyers found that the prices of onions had indeed come down slightly but almost every other vegetable was much dearer.

There was also a marked shortage of kerosene in cities and towns where it is one of the main cooking fuels for the lower middle class and the working class. There also seemed to be little evidence of fear among the trading class and hoarding and blackmarketeering continued to prosper.

What added to the common man's growing resentment of mounting prices was the strange apathy of the new Government to come out with any decisive economic measures to hold the price line. Like the Janata Party, Mrs Gandhi and her Ministers seemed more keen to dwell on the past rather than plan for the future. While Mrs Gandhi had won so resoundingly in the mid-term polls essentially on economic issues, her Government hardly made any pronouncements in this regard and seemed to give more importance to other issues like the dissolution of the State Assemblies.

By itself the price rise was nothing phenomenal and was in keeping with the general inflationary trend seen in the past. But Mrs Gandhi had herself built up an air of expectation by constantly harping on the Janata

By AJOY BOSE



Government's inability to control prices. The Congress (I) election posters had proclaimed, "Vote for a Government that works", but in the first 50 days of the new regime not much evidence of work was seen by common people.

In the capital, Delhi, opposition parties were quick to take advantage of the situation and on February 22 Janata party members of the Delhi Metropolitan Council staged a *dharna* outside the residence of Mr Pranab Mukherjee, the Commerce Minister. The Council members demanded that the Government take immediate steps to bring down the prices.

For a Government that had come to power to conquer inflation, the situation was highly embarrassing. The Government could explain away marginal price increases but there were some basic items like sugar and edible oils which had risen in just one month by nearly 50 per cent.

SUGAR for instance cost 50 per cent more on February 22 than it did a month ago and all other goods 300 per cent more than it did a year ago. Gas prices rose by 40 per cent in the month of Jan. Gasoline rose and 300 per cent compared to the same period last year, even though the price rose by 50 per cent from last year's prices.

Significantly, the price of food articles rose at a much faster rate than manufactured goods, which means that the current inflation hit the poor far more than it did the rich. The wholesale price index for food articles for instance rose from 169.1 on February 22 last year to 221.2 on the same day this year. Manufactured goods however rose from 200.8 last year only to 223.9 this year. During the first month of Mrs Gandhis Government the wholesale price index of food articles rose from 204 to 221.2 while manufactured goods actually came down from 225.8 to 223.9.

The coming Assembly elections have further complicated the picture, and caught Mrs Gandhi between the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, if she does not take immediate measures to control the price rise, it is bound to affect her electoral fortunes. The collapse of the Janata Government in less than three years is ample precedent that if any Government does not deliver the goods, the people are going to reject it, no matter how popular it may initially be. Although the opposition Parties are in a shambles, there are too many shrewd politicians in the opposition to miss the chance of using Mrs Gandhi's own weapon against her.

At the same time, the coming state elections are a hindrance on the Central Government to pass any drastic legislation against the trading class. Mrs Gandhi's political psyche instinctively wants as broad a popular base as possible. It is true that the new Government has passed the Preventive Detention Bill against boarders and blackmarketeers but it remains to be seen how much it will be used before the Assembly elections. The trading community has traditionally been a powerful factor in elections and particularly so in Assembly elections, where local politics plays an important role.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Mrs Gandhi has remained quiet about stern measures against traders. Obviously, she does not want to repeat Chandhury Charan Singh's mistake of depending on one social class alone, to win elections.

Even if she musters the political will to use the stick on traders it can only have a limited effect. The best example of this is the price pattern during the Emergency. When Mrs Gandhi first declared the Emergency in June, 1975, the prices fell drastically but by April, 1976, they started climbing with a vengeance and exceeded by far their earlier peak, by the time the March Lok Sabha elections were held.

It is interesting to see how the price index fell initially and then rose at the outbreak of the Emergency. In April, 1941, two months before the Emergency was declared, the consumer price index for the industrial



working class was 278. This fell to 276 by December, and dropped to 265 by March, 1976. But in April, it started climbing and by October, the price index had reached 280 crossing the April 1975 level. It went on to reach 285 in March, 1977 — a good seven points more than it was just before the Emergency.

The price pattern in the wholesale price index is the same. In April, 1975, the index was at 175.4 but by March next year dropped to 162.6. From the next month, prices started climbing and by July that year had exceeded the pre-Emergency level by two index points and by March 1977 reached 182 — 7.0 points more than the April, 1975 level.

THE price pattern during the Emergency months therefore, demolishes the popular myth that Mrs Gandhi could declare the Emergency and simultaneously nigh inflation. Emergency measures can at best hold the price line or even make it drop for only a limited period of time. There is just no way of trying to combat piecemeal the inherent distortion in the production mechanism in the country which is the basic reason behind the price rise.

Mrs Gandhi's problems are likely to mount in the coming months since the effects of last year's drought will actually be felt in the latter part of this year. She can do little but hope for a good monsoon this year and consequently a bumper harvest. Temporary relief can be sought by stopping exports and increasing imports but the expected rise in petroleum prices will drain away much of the foreign exchange resources that the Government has built up. There is also the new factor of the gulf countries evicting Indian workers which again will prevent foreign exchange reserves from rising rapidly.

On the industrial front, there is the terrible power situation, low production of coal and slow movement of goods trains to plague any economic policy that the Government is planning. While all three are essentially management problems created by negligent or inefficient management, Mrs Gandhi's Government is yet to show any imagination or inclination to handle the situation firmly.

In addition, there is the question of planning itself. The Janata Government had changed many of the basic planning policies of the earlier Mrs Gandhi Government. While all members of the Planning Commission of the Janata regime have resigned, the new Government has not shown much haste in setting up a new Planning Commission.

The continuing price rise and the consequent growing resentment among the people are the first indications that there are troubled times ahead for Mrs Gandhi. She has shown remarkable courage and imagination in making a spectacular political comeback but she will have to show far more if she wants to avoid another mid-term poll in the coming years.



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What has she done?



A diesel queue.

SHE has played a big hoax on us. We thought that she will do something but just nothing has happened. The prices just keep on rising. Tell me Babuji, what is the point of coming to power if you can't do anything for the poor?" Kasturi, a sweeperess who stays in Shakarpur, a North Delhi slum is bitter today about her decision to vote for the Indira Congress.

A crowd collects. Nearly everybody in the slum voted for the Congress (I) candidate. Just two months back, the whole slum had been covered with posters and festoons of the Party with photographs of Mrs Gandhi prominently displayed. Some of them still remain on the walls. Tearing off one of the posters with Mrs Gandhi's face on it, another woman of the colony rips it into many pieces. "When Indiraji had won, we all triumphantly went to the local baniya who is a Jansanghi and told him that he had better lower his prices. He just smiled and said, just wait and see, your Indiraji will not be able to do anything about the prices. They will double. Don't you know that there was *akal* (famine) in the villages last year", she said. "We did not believe him at that time but now after a month, we know that he was right. Indiraji is helpless. She can't tackle these banyas. Just like the Janata, it will be baniyaraj all over again", the woman said gloomily.

Complaints pour in thick and fast from other residents of the colony. "Do you know the price of sugar? Seven rupees a kilo. Okay it is less in the ration but how much do the ration shops give? The Janata had reduced the quota and now Mrs Gandhi has reduced it even further. What are

we to do?", said one. "And sur prices are rising even faster. Why they have more than doubled in a few months", another resident pipes up. They admit that onion prices have come down, but complain that the prices of all other vegetables have gone up. "And even onions have come down from Rs 5 to Rs 3.50. Nowhere near the old prices we had to pay", they lamented.

Apart from the rising cost of food articles, the tremendous rise in kerosene prices plague the slum dwellers. According to them, local authorities send a truck every day to sell kerosene at controlled rates of five litres for Rs 8. "But, before any of us can get near the truck, the kerosene is sold off to blackmarketeers who have a deal with the truckwallah. Later the same kerosene is sold to us at Rs 2.50 a bottle which is less than a litre. We thought Mrs Gandhi would settle these blackmarketeers but the same old tamasha goes on", the residents said.

The resentment to the rising prices is not limited to the poorer sections alone. The lower middle class is equally vocal about what they consider the disappointing performance of the Government of Mrs Gandhi. Jagdish Prasad, a Government lower division clerk who lives in the Lodhi Colony—a South Delhi Government employees' colony, feels that he has been taken for a ride. He too had voted for the Indira Congress because he felt, "only she can bring about some discipline". Prasad admits that it is too early to come to a judgment, but he is angry about the Government's apparent indifference to the growing inflation. "Mrs Gandhi could at least announce some basic steps to control the price rise. This

would at least hold the price level even if prices did not come down. But what we find is the same sort of anarchy and indiscipline that the Janata Government encouraged", Prasad said.

Prasad who earns about Rs 550 has to support a family of five on this salary. "It is absolutely impossible, I tell you, to make two ends meet. I am lucky that I have got a Government quarter. But I have a number of colleagues who have to do with private accommodation. Can you imagine their plight. What with rents going up so much", he said. Prasad is also worried about the coming budget. "We have already given up eating eggs, fish and meat. I think after the budget the kids will have to do without milk as well. I don't know what will happen. We are living on the hope that Mrs Gandhi would come to her senses and do the things for which she had been voted into power", he said.

The upper middleclass is also affected by the rising prices. Dilip Mohan, a young management executive has just sold his car. "It's just too expensive to run a car any more. I think I will shift to a scooter or motorcycle. I guess there will be a fall in status but what to do, I just can't afford it", he said. Dilip Mohan feels that the only way prices can be brought down is to declare another Emergency. "The only sensible decision that Mrs Gandhi has taken in her career is to declare the Emergency. We are still paying for her later decision to revoke the Emergency and declare elections. The Janata Government proved a mess despite all sorts of populist postures and if Mrs Gandhi tries to follow their example, she will be sunk. The only way you can rule this country is through the *danda* (stick). No other method will suffice". Dilip Mohan is frankly reactionary in his attitude.

A restaurant owner was, however quite sceptical about the reactions of the middleclass and upperclass to rising prices. "There is so much hullabaloo about increasing prices, but there are more and more customers in my restaurant even though I have hiked my prices twice in the past year. Actually there is a lot of money in this city. People just pretend to be poor. I am not talking about those who live in slums. They might be having difficulties. But the rest of the people who scream from the rooftops about rising prices, have enough money to buy the stuff, whatever the cost", he said.

AJOY BOSE

AJOY DAS

'The villagers are fed up'

By SUDEB ROYCHOWDHURI

I MET old and wizened Fakir Chand at the weekly haat or village market of Nilgandha, which is about three miles away from Barasat, to the north of Calcutta. He had come to sell a basket of brinjals at the market from Sarpasahi village. I asked him the price of one kg. Rubbing his hand on his grey stubble he said: "Babu, this is a wholesale market. This year has been a bad year for prices. I don't even get Rs 7 for a maund. And I have had to sell the brinjals for Rs 6. That means a kilogram of brinjals costs only 15 paise. On the other hand the price of everything else has risen rapidly. Mustard oil, for example, costs Rs 17 a kg. And kerosene is out of the market. At blackmarket rates, kerosene is available for Rs 3.00 to Rs 3.50 a litre. It is available at ration shops for Rs 1.60 a litre but that is not available to the poor. Sugar has totally vanished from the market. And gur also costs around Rs 3.00 a kg".

Clad only in a dirty lungi and a banian, he spoke of the hard times he was facing. He had brought the brinjals from his fields only to sell them for 15 paise a kg. The same brinjals cost seventy paise in the markets at Calcutta. This did not benefit farmers like Fakir Chand at all. He had seven mouths to feed, and they lived solely on the produce of his fields. If he did not earn enough money he would be forced to sell his cattle. The mortgage business in the village was flourishing in these hard times. The prices of essential commodities were rising rapidly and the poor farmers could not keep pace. They, therefore, had to pawn not only their valuables but also their brass utensils. Apart from all this there was the diesel crisis which had all but crippled the farmers. The farmers, thus, had no other alternative but to sell the crops within the village itself.

At the same market, I met Mr Subodh Banik, a middle-aged man. He lives in the Government quarters in Sodepur near Barasat with 14 family members. He is not illiterate. Failing to get a job he started his own vegetable business. He told me: "Nobody thinks about us. See, there are baskets of vegetables and although I have the necessary finance I cannot buy them. There is no conveyance to take the vegetables to Sodepur because of the scarcity of diesel. Whatever diesel there is, goes to the towns and we in the villages receive nothing. The farmers are suffering and so are we wholesalers. I buy the vegetables from here and sell them in Sodepur. For the past one week, I have not been able to buy anything. While I have not been able to earn

any money I have had to buy necessities like kerosene, mustard oil, spices, etc. at high prices. Can you tell me how I will maintain my family? The prices of vegetables are going down but the prices of other things are rising rapidly".

In Nilgandha in a village called Berabara, I met Mrs Nandika Rana, a primary school teacher and a mother of three children. Her husband also teaches. In the course of our conversation, she said: "Earlier, there were a lot of advantages of living in a village. Now it is no longer so. Coal and kerosene are not available. Mustard oil is Rs 20 a kg. Instead of kerosene I thought of using some other oil but that too is a costly affair. Sugar cannot be seen at all. Whichever Party comes to power, the plight of the people from the villages remains the same. The leaders pay only lip service. Have they ever thought of the people who remain in

their needs. His words echoed the same sentiments: "Sir, prices of everything are rising. Our wages have not increased in the same proportion. This year the vegetable crop has been good but for us it is useless. We will have to sell all that at a loss. From the next season, we are going to plant mustard. This is the first time I have come to the town for a job. And it is only because it is impossible to make both ends meet. I have married recently and that is why it is necessary for me to find work. Whatever I earn by labouring throughout the day will be spent in buying mustard oil, kerosene, etc. In the past three years the prices of essential commodities have doubled. In my family there are seven members and the only earning member is my father. Now I am earning too. But together our earnings are insufficient". The picture was the same in almost every village I visited. The



A kerosene queue

darkness throughout the night? Kerosene has disappeared from many shops in the village. Wherever there is a little left there are long queues and only a litre per head is being sold. The people from the panchayat keep on saying: "There is nothing to fear. Kerosene is coming. The present scarcity is due to the disturbances in Assam". Take sugar, the people in the towns receive 100 grammes per head per week while in the villages only 75 grammes per head is sold. Why should there be this partiality? Further, in the modified rationing areas foodgrains are not available all the time. Sugar is one such commodity. The blackmarket rate is Rs 6.80 a kg which is beyond the buying capacity of the villagers".

Near the Barasat bus-stop, I met young Ruidas Malo, looking rather worried. He had come in search of a job to Barasat. His father is a farmer and the quantity of grain produced from their fields barely fulfils

farmer and the villager could not keep pace with the rising prices.

I met a shopkeeper near Barasat station who told me that people had quarrelled and fought recently over kerosene oil. "My demand is for a thousand litres but I received 300 litres only. As it is there is a scarcity of essential goods and to top it all there is this trouble over distribution. The villagers are fed up," he said. "The difficulties of the common man will not be lessened," said Nandakishore De, a farmer from Barasat. "Earlier, we used to buy sarrees at controlled rates. Now these are not available. To buy a sarree of the same quality now one has to spend Rs 30.

We farmers only want the Government to make adequate arrangements for us for selling our vegetables at fair rates. But no Government is willing to do that. As a result, the small farmers have never been able to come out of the clutches of middlemen".

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My son doesn't like school anymore

By Rev. KURUVILLA CHANDY

MY son had been in love with his school from the very first day. Unlike other children he did not cry when left alone at school. Instead he cried when he had to come away. Six weeks later, he cried because he had to go to school.

The little fellow was only three years old and had just joined a nursery school. We did not send him there because we wanted to start him early on a career of acquiring book knowledge, but because we wanted him to have an opportunity to play and interact with children his age. Living in the church compound, in a non-residential area, he has had no playmates and so nursery school was merely to compensate that.

To our dismay we discovered that the children were to be in uniform. Uniforms are symbols of

regimentation. Undoubtedly children must learn the value of group disciplines, however, nursery-age children need, not a curbing of their instinctive curiosity about the world, but the freedom and joy of discovery. While uniforms do not in themselves limit the child's exploratory nature, they are symbols that presage the total style of operations. Other dismaying features were that the children were to have two text books—one for the alphabets, and another for numbers. What was really frightening was that these three-year-olds were to have even a homework diary. We shared our concerns with the teachers but were told that other parents did not feel the way we did and would not think of school as school unless there was some book-learning and homework. For just a few months before school began we had housed and cared for

a little boy who went to school. So our son had been wanting to go to school like his little friend!

The first day of school came. My wife took him to school and when she said that she was going home, he just wished her good-bye. She confessed that she was a little disappointed that he had not cried. Imagine her chagrin when she discovered that while other children were relieved and glad when their ordeal at school was over, our son cried because he had to come home. Fortunately other parents were concerned about their own, or they would have wondered about the kind of home we had.

The first couple of weeks the children just played. Those were our son's happiest days at school. He asserted himself in his choice of toys. He was a loner still because he did not know the local language. But he enjoyed himself. And then word was sent home that he would need to start taking his books to school. Two weeks later the homework diary was called for. When he came back with it, we discovered that he was scheduled for a test in 10 days' time and he had to learn 13 nursery rhymes in English, a couple in Hindi, numbers one to ten, the letters 'a' to 'p'



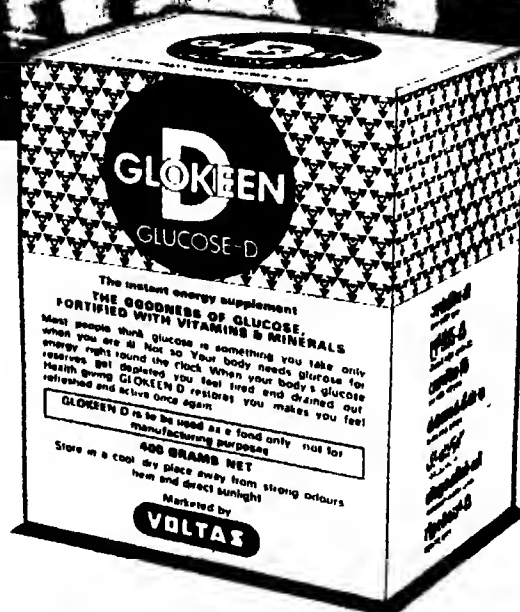
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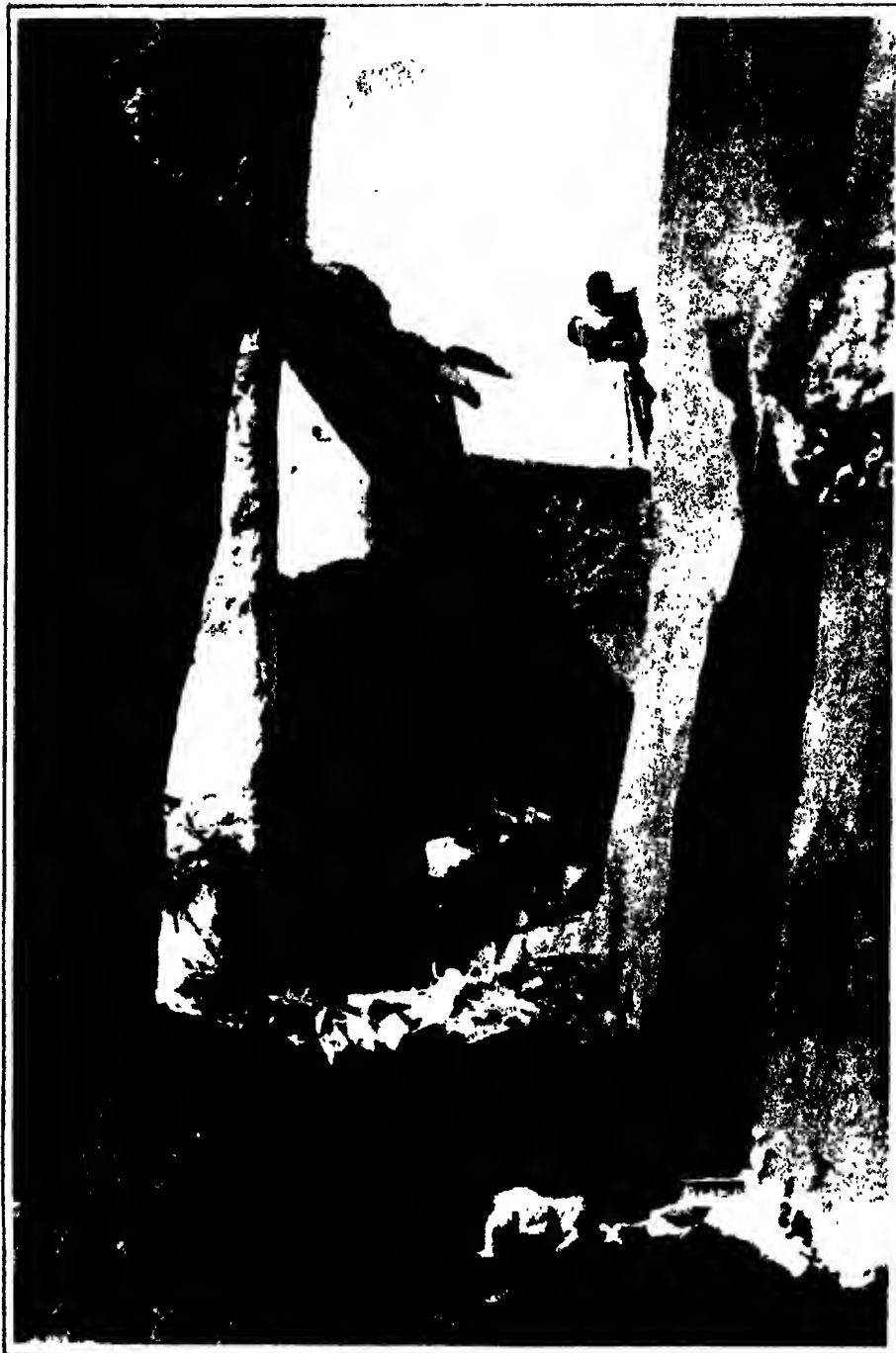
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The night Pipra became a graveyard

S. P. SAGAR reports on the violent outburst of a class-caste conflict that has simmered for generations

AT 10 pm on the night of February 25, the dogs of Pipra village in Ratna district began to howl ominously, snatching the calm of the surroundings. The eight men on guard duty that night knew that there was danger afoot. In a little while there were sounds of activity in the fields around the village and the narijans of Pipra began to hurl stones at the shadows. Given a fair chance to defend themselves, the inhabitants of Pipra might have been able to save themselves, but no one was going to give them any chances that fateful night. An estimated 400 people surrounded the hamlets and began throwing kerosene soaked nreballs onto the crude hovels. Soon the blaze from the huts threw leaping shadows and in the eerie scene. One group of marauders forced their way into one of the huts on the periphery of the village and slaughtered nine people there. First they were shot, then they were hacked to pieces and finally thrown into the leaping flames. Men, women and children met the same ghastly fate. There was no quarter given that murderous night at Pipra.

In another hut, three more people were slaughtered, bringing the death toll to 13. One more succumbed to his injuries on the way to hospital and several others were wounded. Even as the carnage took place, the survivors took shelter in a brick house that was under construction and began hurling brickbats at their attackers. It was an impossible situation: brickbats against a hail of bullets, but the inhabitants of Pipra continued their resistance till 4 am, six hours after the initial attack. When the invaders retreated, they left behind them roasted bodies, dead animals and burnt huts. Pipra was no longer a village. It was a graveyard.

The police could only enter the area at dawn. They had tried to do so earlier, at 3 am, but the lights of their jeep were thought to herald a new wave of attackers. The villagers had directed the fury of their brickbats at the jeep and in the uproar, a constable was injured and the police posse had to retreat.

MURDERS, extortion and looting of crops are not at all unusual in the area around Pipra. The place swarms with firearms—most of them illegally manufactured. The landowners in this area, the Poonpooon Unanaruha - Masaurhi - Naubampur belt are generally intermediate caste kurms, while the people who actually till the land are the narijans. The weaker sections supply farm labour in return for meagre wages. Land owners usually operate hand in glove with criminals and the weaker sections live in a constant state of oppression and fear. For generations, the relationship between the two classes has been that of master and serf.

Now and again, there were incidents of agrarian uprising, but these

took a dangerous turn after 1970. Landholders would be killed by mysterious assailants, whom the police would refer to euphemistically as "extremists".

The climax came in 1975. The police killed 14 people, believed to be extremists, in an encounter at Gno-
rauan in the Masaurhi police area. A short while later came the retaliation. Ten rifles were snatched from some Home Guards at Akbarpur and to date, have not been recovered. Poor communications have plagued the guardians of the law in this area and extremists and lawless elements have revelled in the situation. Killing of land owners became almost routine: one kurmi leader recalled no less than 22 incidents of rich kurnis being murdered in the last ten years. Every time the pattern was the same: the land owner would be shot and then his head would be cuopped off.

It was against this backdrop that the provocation for the Pipra murders built up. On July 26 last year, a kurmi landowner named Dwarka Singh was shot dead at 3 pm one afternoon at Dekun, near roonpoon. Most of the accused were harijans, and the attitude of the kurmi landowners began to harden towards the harijans. In their minds, all kurmi murders were the work of the harijans: a dangerous fire was being stoked.

The weaker sections began to raise their voices for better wages and better working conditions. In some cases foodgrains from the farms would be looted, while in others they would demand "donations" from the landlords and the latter, having no option, would have to oblige. Leadership came from units of political Parties waiting in the wings. In one incident at Tulsi Chak, a fear-stricken kurmi named Lagan Singh parted with several maunds of rice by way of "donation" to a band of militant harijans. As far as the landowners were concerned, the writing on the wall was clear and they resolved to face the challenge unitely. They held secret meetings, collected funds and formed a committee: the Kisan Suraksha Samity.

The chairman of the samity was Bhola Singh, a prominent landowner in a village called Kalyan Chak, one km from Pipra. The treasurer was another kurmi landowner, Deonandan Singh, from Kamalpur village. According to one report, a sum of Rs 50,000 to 60,000 was collected by the landowners to achieve their ends. The first spark that culminated in the carnage at Pipra was lit on December 6 1979. Bhola Singh, the chairman of the samity, was murdered in a field barely one km away from his own village. The attack took place at dusk and Bhola Singh's head was cut off and carried away by his assailants. The dead man's brother, who was an eyewitness to the murder, named four harijans as the accused. Significantly, however none of the accused belonged to Pipra. According to the police, they were all "well-known Naxalites".



The next death was that of Deonandan Singh, the treasurer of the samity. Four people attacked him at 11 am on January 31 this year. No one was accused, but the facts themselves were confusion. Deonandan Singh was on bad terms with his own caste, the kurnis, and at the same time, he had taken a punitive fee from the residents of a nearby village. Suspicion could have rested anywhere. But, for the kurnis, the murders of Dwarka Singh, Bhola Singh and Deonandan Singh all had one thing in common: the invisible hand of their arch enemies, the harijans.

The division was complete: the landowners on one side and the labourers on the other.

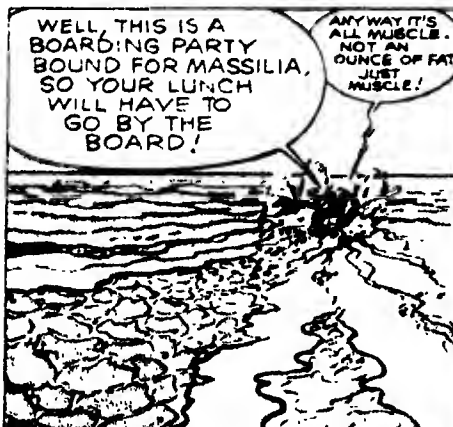
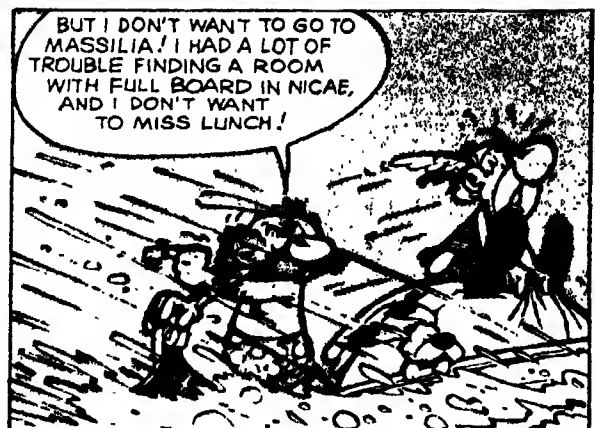
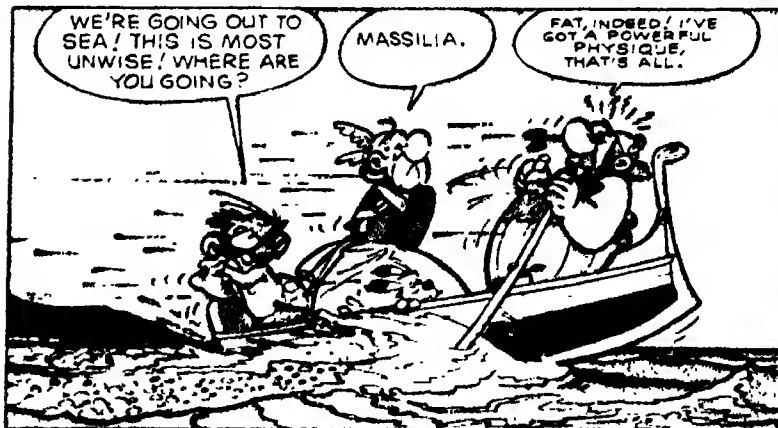
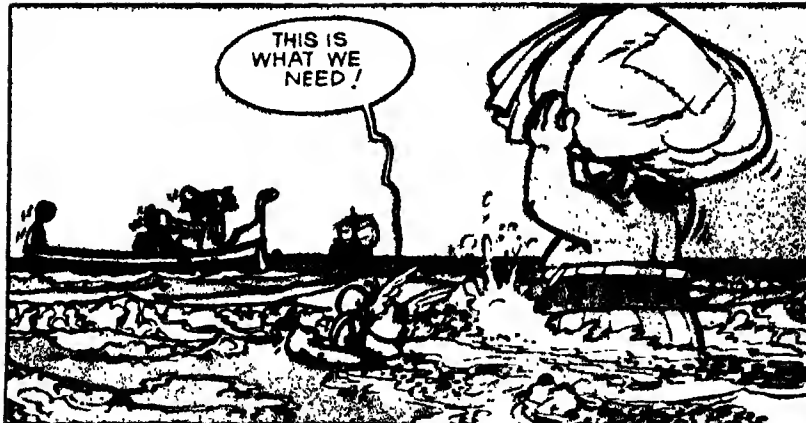
The residents of the village of Kalyan Chak suspected the harijans of Pipra. There is, however, no evidence of any wage dispute between the landowners of Kalyan Chak and the labourers of Pipra. Indeed, the whole economy of Pipra had, over the years, become dependent on the wealth of Kalyan Chak, barely one km away. The residents of Pipra—with the exception of one family—are either landless or own nominal tracts. The latter do not own enough land to support themselves. So the people of Pipra work all the year round on the fields of their Kalyan Chak masters. Their daily wages amount to "a seer of khesari and half seer of sattu given as a midday meal in fields". There was another reason behind the suspicion of the landowners pointing at Pipra. The murderers of Bhola Singh had fled away in "the direction of Pipra village". In addition, Bhola Singh's cousin, Radhika Singh, had maintained a harijan "wife" called Taramuni over the last 20 years. Taramuni, who was only 35, stayed in Pipra and was suspected to be an informer of the Kalyan Chak kurnis. Her presence became too much for the harijans at Pipra and they expelled her one day, which only served to irk Radhika Singh. The odds were stacking up against Pipra. On one or two occasions, Radhika Singh threatened the harijans, after which

a nightlong watch was set up at Pipra. The harijans decided not to approach the police: "After all, who listens to the poor?"

AFTER the Pipra killings, the police discovered that the attackers had left behind a pair of shoes and a coarse red towel. The scent of the former led a police tracking dog to the house of Bhola Singh in Kalyan Chak. The scent of the towel led to the house of Kesri Singh, another kurmi.

A house search at Parthu village unearthed 64 cartridges of .315 calibre, which tallied with the 70 odd cartridges recovered from Pipra. The house belonged to yet another kurmi landowner, Snailendra Singh, who does not possess a gun licence. As the CRP party approached Parthu village, a harijan opened fire on them. He was later apprehended and is alleged to be one of the people who took part in the attack on Pipra. Of the 39 accused, the most important are the kurmi mukha and sarpanch of the area.

It is significant that the Pipra attack took place a week after the Bihar Assembly was dissolved. Belchi, Parasbgha and Pipra are all beads on the same chain: sporadic cases of class and caste confrontations between the rural haves and have-nots. There are 6.81 million landless agricultural labourers in Bihar, a figure which corresponds to 39 per cent of the total working population in the state. The Land Ceiling Act—which has been in force since 1962—notwithstanding, landowners in Champaran, Purnea, Katihar and Saharsa continue to retain thousands of acres of land. The surplus land acquired so far totals no more than 2.32 lakh acres, of which 1.3 lakh acres have so far been distributed "officially" among the landless. In most cases, it is barren land, while in others, the allottees have been indisposed to take it over. The collective consciousness of the harijans is being aroused, but the kulaks still rule the roost. There is still a long and bloody conflict ahead.

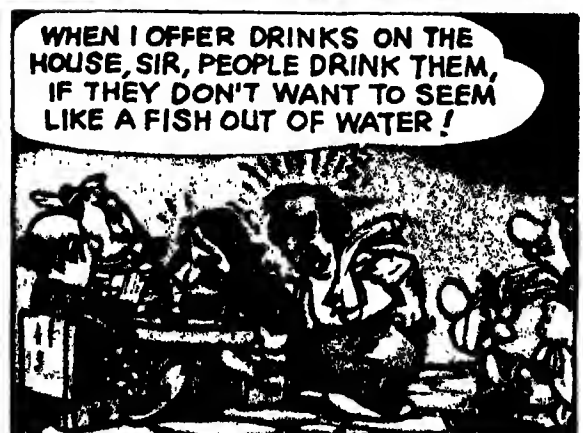
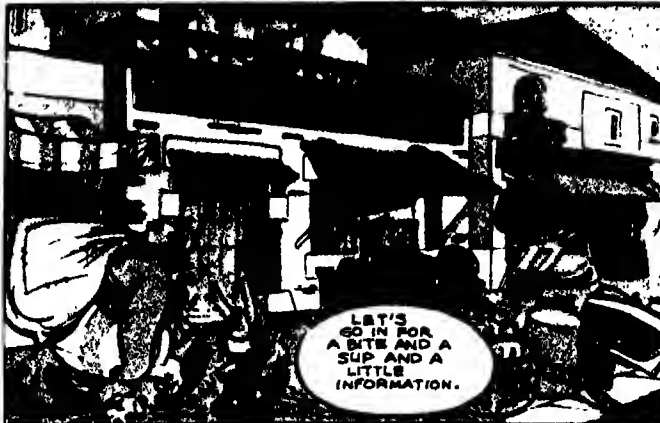


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2. You can send in as many entries as you like, but each entry must be accompanied by a cash memo for any item of 'V.I.P.' luggage purchased on or after 1st February 1980. The luggage may be from either the 'V.I.P.' Classic or 'V.I.P.' Travelite ranges.
3. All entries must be submitted only on "We'll give you the World!" Contest Entry Forms, which are available at all 'V.I.P.' dealers, or on the Entry Form in this advertisement.
4. Fill in your full name, address and the caption in capitals, in English.

5. Supercribe "We'll give you the World!" Contest clearly on the envelope and mail your Entry Form to Blow Plast Limited, P.O. Box 9145, Bombay 400 025.

6. All entries must arrive on or before 31st March 1980.

7. We undertake no responsibility for any entries lost, delayed or damaged in transit.

8. Entries must be sent by ordinary post only, NOT by hand delivery or registered post.

9. All entries become the property of the Company.

10. All prizes are subject to Indian Tax Laws wherever applicable. Winners will have to make their own arrangements for passports, visas and eligibility for foreign travel.

11. Illegible or incomplete entries become invalid.

12. Judging of entries will be done by an independent panel.

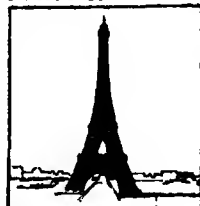
The judges' decision will be final and binding, and no correspondence will be entertained. The winners will be those who have selected the correct answers and whose caption is judged to be the best. All winners will be notified by post. The names of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize winners will be announced in the Press.

13. All tours announced in this Contest are in the form of Package Tours organised by SOTC Travels & Tours in cooperation with Air-India and are subject to the rules and regulations of such tours.

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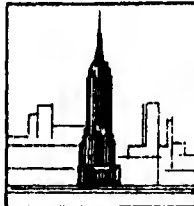
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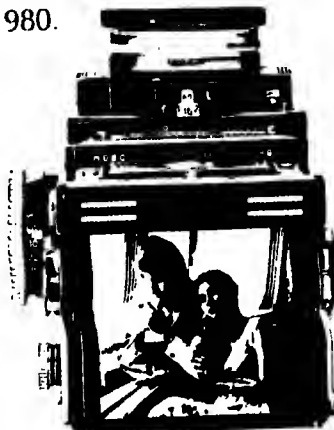
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distinguish between colours, identify animals (even to the extent of knowing the difference between a cow, an ox and a buffalo) and know classroom manners. We protested again and were once again given the excuse that other parents just wanted this sort of thing.

Around this time, he had a six-day bout with a severe cold and cough, when we kept him back from school. When this period of indisposition was over and he had to return to school, he threw a tantrum. So many days away from school had in no way whet the school-going appetite he had manifested earlier. The teacher's explanation was that because he had been away from school for so long he had got into the habit of staying at home. I simply cannot buy that because my son had cried to go to school on holidays and had cried when school was over and he had to come away. Now he says, "School is bad". At the time of writing, he is resigned to the idea that he has to go to school. I rather think that the change of attitude has come about because school is no longer play. When I said that, I was told it could not always be play. Quite right. But I contend that the play is over too soon for a three-year-old because educationists are giving in to the pressures of anxious parents who know nothing about education and child psychology. On the other hand, parents may be just reflecting the present educational milieu of a spiralling amount of school and homework.

When I was a schoolboy, an eminent educationist used to visit my parents. Once seeing me at my thick volumes on chemistry and physics, he remarked about how children were being overloaded in our country, making them ear-worn. He is still in the field of education and still talks of the need for reform. So, too, have other educationists harped on the subject of reforms and the need for giving back to our children their childhood. But it has all been talk. No one is implementing even his own ideas, let alone those of others. For instance, everyone decries our examination system and its faults. The same people head schools where performance at a test (a stereotype of all examinations to come) determines all future opportunities on the basis that all potential ability has been assessed at once. Branding for life in this fashion is sheer injustice. Quality of one's previous life-experiences and opportunities, nervous state at the time of testing, and personal inclinations are not considered as factors affecting the performance in a given test. When these tests are administered to kindergarten children they become inhuman and unjust.

Talk is cheap, but change is cost-

ly. For one thing it will cost the state's approval which depends entirely on conformity to the regulations. A reformer by that rule is a renegade. Another factor that hinders change, and it follows on from the state's approval, is that a reputed institution affords the head and/or sponsoring organisation tremendous power in society. Thus change could bring a loss of power. One wonders whether even Christian institutions, founded originally on missionary principles, are concerned about having a redemptive and reformative role in society. I refer to Christian schools and colleges, because they are definitely the trend-setters in the realm of education. I suspect that the primary interest in bringing education to the illiterate, the downtrodden and the oppressed has been given up, and increasingly the concern now is to extend their facilities to the well-to-do, the well-placed and the ones with power in society, so that ecclesiastical bodies will have that much of influence in the echelons of power. Their policy of admitting only "first class material" is a case in point. These are those who have been able to afford learning opportunities that prepare them for school. Those who fail to qualify are those whose parents could not afford them educational toys and picture books. Sending children home with work to be completed, is another way of continuing the denial of equal chances in learning. The child of uneducated parents who can neither help him with his work, nor afford him private tuitions is bound to fail in this system. While these are only indirect results of a system that favours the "haves", the authorities have also been known to grant employment opportunities to wives and admissions to children of Government officials or otherwise well-placed persons in preference to the more needy and deserving. It is a you-scratch-my-back-I-scratch-your's exercise.

Power is a heady thing. Who does not enjoy having it? The proverbial corruption that follows in its wake, does not always take the form of blatant graft. It can be the enjoying of privileges and the lulling of the reformer's conscience. So that he is satisfied with merely voicing an opinion without laying his life on the line. Our day has seen too many armchair reformers, who have become adept at conferring, verbalising concerns, passing emphatic resolutions and moving on to the next conference on the next 'in' topic. What we need today is a moratorium on all conferences and then reformers who will go to the stake. And I hope the reformers will hurry up while children are still children so that they will not have to miss out on the joys of a care-free childhood.

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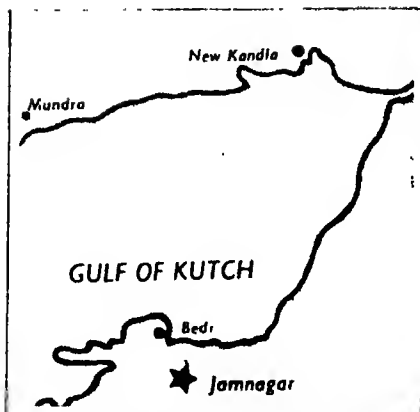
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Jamnagar's mysterious millions

DAVID McMAHON tried to find out where they come from

FROM four and a half miles high, the landscape around Jamnagar is predominantly barren. The ground, so far below, is a dark brown that contrasts sharply with the blue of the sky. There is no green; everything is in varying shades of brown, almost like a monochrome. Nothing moves on the ground and it is many miles of airspace before you notice the first road, a thin grey ribbon that is easily visible from far away, for it stands out in sharp contrast to the desolate surroundings. You notice a small cluster of huts and for the first time, a touch of green on the land. Then there is emptiness again and as Jamnagar approaches, you notice that the landscape is changing gradually. Making across the land are irregular, misshapen tracts that probe the barren land like skeletal fingers. They stand out harshly against the rest of the land features, for they are the stark, lighter brown of desert sand.

Yet, strange as it may seem, Jamnagar city, set amidst this inhospitable terrain, is fast becoming an island of wealth. Local residents have a saying that goes: "Throw a stone and you'll either hit a camel or a

millionaire". Sometimes it becomes difficult to tell whether the camels outnumber the millionaires or vice versa; and there are plenty of camels. But frivolity aside, Jamnagar, with its population of four lakhs, ranks as one of the foremost industrial cities in the state of Gujarat. Till just a few years ago, it was a place of loneliness, consisting of a few small houses and a cluster of villages, surrounded on two sides by desert, the Gulf of Kutch on the third and the Arabian Sea on the fourth. Now, there are factories springing up overnight; the city has expanded; new houses are appearing with startling rapidity; from a myriad different areas drift the pillars of smoke common to all industrial cities. Jamnagar, once practically unknown, is rapidly making its presence felt.

There is money everywhere, in incredible quantities. You don't have to go looking for people with wealth; they are all over. The local tailor, by whose scissors the entire population of the city swears, and who is by all accounts, as good a man as one could hope to find and as honest, has a bungalow that looks like an architect's dream. It is single-storeyed, painted in pastel shades, has a swing

in the courtyard and bougainvillea along the walls. Construction is under way for an extension to the bungalow. This is just one example, there are several more. One of the local *dhobis* (washermen) has no problem carrying the inevitable bundle of clothes around the city. He does not have to trudge for miles along the dusty roads or wait for a bus to take him to his destination, for he has his own scooter and a flashy crash helmet. One of the milkmen in Jamnagar has a second source of income—he doubles as the proud and prosperous owner of a button factory.

The people to whom I spoke give me a variety of reasons for the presence of such wealth. By far the most interesting was the smuggling theory, which was endorsed, among others, by a senior customs official. In the past (no one could tell me exactly when it started or when it took a decline) smuggling set the trend for the economy of Jamnagar and each smuggler king had his own empire. Their greatest asset was the terrain, for the thousand-mile stretch of Gujarat coastline was geographically suited to their purpose. Law enforcement officers and customs

An artist's impression of smuggling on the Jamnagar coastline

Illustration by Jayanta Ghosh



other street, although they did maintain hawk-eyed lookouts at certain points which were known to be favoured by the smugglers. Contraband in the form of gold, wrist-watches, nylon, perfumes and drugs, emanating from sources in the Arabian sea used to find their way to Jamnagar and the smuggling racket flourished in this fashion. Money flowed in and out of the city freely and in massive quantities, thanks to the traffic in contraband goods.

And then, surprisingly enough, the trend staged an abrupt volte face. The smuggling continued, but in an altogether different form. Jamnagar suddenly came clean. No longer were smuggled goods disposed of within the city. Former kingpins in the trade lost interest in what had hitherto been a way of life for them. Today, Gujarat is still plagued by the problem of smugglers and though Jamnagar is still one of the most popular dumping grounds for contraband, the picture has altered radically. The city is used as a link in the smuggling chain which passes goods on to Bombay, from where they are sold. The taint of smugglers' money is no longer associated with Jamnagar. In a complete reversal of situations, the money in the city is white, incredibly enough.

No one denies that contraband is still disposed of within Jamnagar, but this is a microscopic percentage of what the figure once was. Those goods that are actually bought in the city before the rest passes on to Bombay are actually incidental purchases, a far cry from the booming

These purchases are conducted from the most unlikely places. I was once shown a pawn shop and asked if there was anything extraordinary about it. I replied in the negative and my companion laughed. "If there is ever anything you want in the way of smuggled goods, you just have to contact the owner and you'll get it in a few days, or if you're in luck, within a few hours".

TO some extent, Jamnagar's money has been channelled in through the African countries as well. Many people from the city decided in the late Fifties and early Sixties to quit the country and start a new life abroad. Most of them chose Africa as their new home, while a minority settled in England. Once they had established themselves there, they began sending large sums of money back to their families who had remained on in Jamnagar. This money was put to good use by the Gujarat-based relatives, who invested it in small-scale industry and waited for profits which they later reinvested in order to expand. But by far the over-riding reason for Jamnagar's new-found prosperity is the inherent technical sense and business acumen that are so much a part of the mental makeup of every Gujarati.

A bank once opened a small branch in Jamnagar with the express purpose of providing loans to local labourers and farmers. On the very day of its inauguration, the labourers and farmers in the area flocked to

the bank. The money, instead, by the end of the day, bemused bank officials had counted and verified a stunning total of Rs two crores worth of deposits. Jamnagar's real wealth, however, stems from its five major industries—oil, salt, brass, gypsum and bauxite mining and plastic.

The major source of income is the oil industry for groundnut is grown in plenty in the region. Groundnut is a cash crop harvested once a year and the industry has, not surprisingly, expanded tremendously over the last five years. The biggest name in Jamnagar's oil circles is that of Mr A. L. Saigal, whom I met at his residence late one evening and who welcomed me in despite the fact that I had not made an appointment. "Twenty years ago," he said, "this place had only 15 or 20 oil mills and just one oil extraction plant. The expansion in the oil industry here has been accompanied by large profits and this region now provides 33 per cent of the country's requirements in this respect."

The first stage in the extraction of oil from the groundnut is the crushing, for which process machines called expellers are used. These machines, ideally suited to this purpose, are not too expensive and are responsible for the removal of all edible oils from the groundnut. The residue after the squeezing process is termed oil cake, from which a further seven per cent of oil is available and which is then extracted with the help of petroleum. The cake is immersed in the solvent, the oil settles to the bottom, from where it is removed and refined. The de-oiled cake is then exported, leading to a complete utilisation of the raw material. Previously, Mr Saigal said the oil cake used to be disposed of till someone discovered that it could be put to further use.

JAMNAGAR also earned a great deal of foreign exchange through the export of hand-picked seeds (HPS) from which the large-sized nuts (which are roughly twice as large as normal peanuts) are utilised. Just one machine is necessary for the processing of these hand-picked seeds and since the machine in question costs



as little as Rs 25,000 or 30,000, the initial outlay is negligible in comparison with the profits.

Gujarat also has the distinction of producing 60 per cent of India's salt requirements, of which 40 per cent is produced in the salt pans of Jamnagar district. Salt was once exported in bulk, making it a very paying profession, but foreign exchange earnings dwindled when a heavy cyclone in 1977 put paid to most of Jamnagar's stocks. Third on the priority list of industries comes brass, and one wonders where the raw materials could possibly come from. The answer is novel: they come from the military firing range nearby, where spent cartridges and shells lie in the sand, the brass of their casings winking in the sun. There are more than 900 tiny sectors (where the investment in plant and machinery is less than Rs one lakh) and small scale units now, while in 1966 there was a grand total of 175 units only. Almost all the units today fall under the tiny sector and their supply of raw materials is augmented by the import of brass scrap which is currently freely permitted.

An incredible 90 per cent of India's brass requirements is met by Jamnagar's industries. The requisite knowhow is mastered by several of the villagers and in one particular area, every alternate house has its brass workers. In Jamnagar, 25 of the 900 factories manufacture cycle valves that meet the demands of the Indian market. And that is not all. Unbelievable though it may seem, these factories also supply 50 per cent of the total demand of the South-east Asian countries. Last year a total of four crores of these valves were sold abroad at a price of 70 paise each. In addition to valves, Jamnagar also produces brass battery terminals, radio fittings and the essential parts of petromax lanterns and stoves. Most of the labourers in these factories are women and youngsters who do the bulk of the work, including that on the lathe machines since there is now a drastic shortage of labour. It is not uncommon to see someone engaged in the brass industry sans a hand or a leg: the result of wandering onto the firing range in the hope of collecting some booty while the range itself is not yet clear. On the other hand, there are stories of villagers who are so skilled in disarming 'live' weapons to strip them of their brass that they are sometimes considered the equals of trained bomb disposal units. One of the tales I heard—and it came from an autho-

ritative source—concerned a man who was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for stealing on the range. When he was finally released, he wasted no time in reappearing at the scene of his old crimes and was promptly arrested again, this time on the charge of stealing a pistol.

Jamnagar's foreign exchange earnings are further augmented by the export of diesel engines, used in the sinking of tubewells, which netted Rs two crores in 1978. Radial drills too are exported in large quantities and bring in a sizable amount of foreign exchange. Export earnings from Jamnagar's ports, Bedi, Sikka, Salaya and Okha have registered a substantial increase which is due in no small measure to the congestion at Bombay. Although figures have been fluctuating, the mean has been Rs 100 crores a year and experts feel that even this figure would escalate rapidly if the system of unloading were improved at these ports. Since all loa-

to tell whether he was looking out into the distance or at his factory alongside. "Now, all that is changed. I suppose the real credit must go to the people of this place, because they have really achieved everything through the sweat of their brows. It is nothing but their own toil which has made them what they are today. At one stage there were just a few casing factories here which, believe it or not, were started by none other than former labourers. Those with the wealth in Jamnagar are all self-made men who, in most cases, started with practically little or no capital."

A COMMON practice is to employ part-time workers since labour is comparatively expensive. The workers are paid on a commission basis in most organisations and so it is quite normal to find a number of them who earn up to Rs 20 a day. Since they are paid according to the rate of production, their level of efficiency is unbelievably high and some of the industrialists in the district claim that they work almost as well as machines. This is no exaggeration, they added.

"A great deal of the credit for the rapid development of this area must go to Mr Manubhai Shah, the former Union Minister for Commerce in the late Sixties," Mr Anjaria said. "He was the one who really did all he could to encourage industrial growth. He was scrupulously honest and was always true to his word. A person who went to him with a request for an industrial licence could approach him secure

in the knowledge that he would not have to wade through reams of red tape before he attained his goal."

As a result, Manubhai Shah's dream of a highly industrialised Jamnagar has paid rich dividends in slightly more than a decade. There are two major cement factories in the area, one at Sikka and the other at Dwarka, while Digjam Mills too have their base in Jamnagar. Cement produced at Sikka used to be exported at one time, though shipments made now are actually old commitments since there is now an embargo on the export of cement. In fact, the Sikka complex is so much a part of the region that pilots approaching Jamnagar are instructed to use as a prime navigational aid the column of thick black smoke emitted by the factory.

Even industrialists have their own problems. At the Nawanager (the



The interior of the Jain Temple at Jamnagar

ding and unloading depends entirely on the operation of the barges—which is unreliable, to say the least—delays are unavoidable.

"This region has registered phenomenal industrial expansion over the last ten years," according to Mr Anjaria, one of Jamnagar's wealthiest and most respected industrialists. "But it has never been smooth sailing all the way although people seem to think this is the case. In the late Forties the situation here was totally opposite to what it is now, believe it or not. Money was really tight then; we had to sell the furniture of our local club to pay the salaries of the servants. At that stage it was a princely state and there were certainly no industries worth the name then. We had to make telephone calls from the post office." At this point he stopped and gazed out of his window for several moments. It was difficult

former name for Jamnagar) Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Chief Executive, Mr P. B. Purohit endorsed the views of the people who had spoken to me earlier about their problems. Their biggest single headache is, predictably enough, shortage of power. Those factories that are powered by electricity suffer because of restriction on consumption, while those that are fuelled by coal fires are no better off since there is a chronic shortage in the supply of coal to Gujarat. On one occasion, the state Government, with all good intentions, earmarked 110 wagons for the supply of coal but only 20 of them eventually arrived, a situation which led to chaos among the coal-powered industries. "If we get twenty per cent of our demand fulfilled, we consider ourselves fortunate," Mr Purohit said. This shortage of wagons also affects the transportation of salt from Jamnagar. The demand for wagons registered with the railway totalled 1,026 at the end of March 1979 (a figure which includes the demand pending till that period) but only 250 wagons were cleared during March.

Another cause of industrial blood pressure is the shortage of water. The supply from Ranjitsagar is meant solely for domestic use in Jamnagar but the city's four lakh inhabitants are denied part of their water so that the industries can make up their shortage. However, even this plan has not brought about any effective means of relief so far. Nor is this likely to happen soon. One prime consumer gets only five lakh gallons instead of its ten lakh gallon requirement. The filter capacity for the city of Jamnagar

is only 60 lakh gallons and though there has been a proposal for a separate link with the Sasol Lake, 25 kilometres away, nothing more has been heard about this plan.

Finally, according to some leading industrialists—and this was confirmed by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry—vacant land is not being released by the state Government, making expansion or new ventures difficult. However, if weaker sections of society form a co-operative and apply for land, the Government will consider the release of surplus acreage. This has given rise to the common grouse that Governmental policy has two aspects: vacillation and procrastination.

The growth rate in air traffic in the region has also shown an admirable upsurge in the last few years as the money keeps pouring into Jamnagar. Till 1978 there was a twice-daily Avro (HS 748) flight from

Bombay to Jamnagar and Bhuj but the demand for seats on these flights was so great that Indian Airlines finally decided to switch over to a Boeing service in late May 1978. The Boeing 737, even with its 120-plus seating capacity, that now serves this route is always full. There was the case of a person who arrived in Bombay with a request ticket for the onward flight to Jamnagar. He foresaw no problems till he tried getting his ticket endorsed at the Indian Airlines booking counter, where he was told that he was "chance number 28" for the next day's flight. He retaliated by asking when he could get a confirmed seat for the flight, expecting to hear the answer "day after tomorrow" but was further taken aback when informed that he would not get one for the next eight days.

There was no racket involved: what he was told was the absolute truth. There is always a mad scramble for air tickets on that sector, which is surprising in view of the

ple are investing their money in property and building their own houses. What was once a town is now expanding rapidly into a city, but there are still camel carts aplenty on the main street of Jamnagar. The main form of transport used to be carriages drawn by ponies, but now there are auto-rickshaws and other weird-looking contraptions that are actually a cross between ancient motorcycles and equally antedeluvian carriages. These are the main forms of transport within the city, while outside the city limits there are dusty, bug-ridden buses that are traditionally short on punctuality.

THE main street of Jamnagar stretches perhaps for about three-quarters of a mile and the buildings on either side are old and rickety. The ground is scorching hot and it is not until after seven o'clock in the evening that the heat begins to de-

crease; after seven there is a cool breeze that lures everyone outdoors. The results are catastrophic; at the best of times traffic on the main street is chaotic but in the evenings, with crowds thronging the narrow sidewalk, it is folly to venture out unless one is agile enough to avoid the hooves of a sidestepping camel. It seems as if everybody has decided to take an evening walk simultaneously. The only possible recreation is a movie at one of the two halls or, for the very wealthy, a game of tennis followed by a swim at the local club. The latter is exclusive and though entry fees have been raised drastically to stem the influx of new mem-

bers, no one seems to be averse to paying the enhanced rates.

Local architecture favours single and double-storeyed bungalows, each with its own neat garden and boundary wall. Nowhere are there the ugly high-rise buildings that are associated with other cities. The bungalows are all neatly maintained and the curtains in most of them look the expensive type, while the cars parked inside the compounds are in some cases imported. No two houses are alike, for each has its own individuality, be it in the form of a glassed-in balcony or an ornate gateway. The only harsh note is struck by the colour schemes of the bungalows. Each one is worse than the one before and the shades of paint used never seem to match one another.

This was the land of the legendary Ranjitsin, and Duleepsingji, both of whom belonged to the royal family



An old picture of Jam Rawal, the founder of Jamnagar

fact that Jamnagar has nothing to attract tourists. The fact is that local residents have enough money to spurn the long, dusty, uncomfortable train journey to Bombay and fly instead. There are few smartly-dressed, briefcase-toting businessmen on this flight. Instead—and this is in no way intended to be a belittling description—there are grizzled old men with the callous hands of labourers; their wives speak no English and do not know what to do with their seat belts. I was told the story of a man who chewed paan throughout the 45-minute flight and sat with his legs crossed under him. Just before landing at Jamnagar he looked out and excitedly told a fellow passenger that they were flying over his home. The fellow traveller craned his neck to look out and saw a small cluster of huts below.

There are fewer villages in Jamnagar now, for more and more peo-

of the state. One of my guides took me to a large field, now overgrown, and explained that the two legendary cricketers had learned their art there. But there is no trace of that bygone era now, for the grass that must have existed at one time is no longer; it is barren land, with weeds and rocks in abundance. Jamnagar was founded by one of Ranji's ancestors, Jam Rawal, who actually named the place Nawanagar, or new town.

THE former princely House of Jamnagar might never have been but for the murder of Rawal's father, Lakhaji, who ruled in Terabani in Kutch. His two cousins, Tamachi Deda of Kathiawar and Hamirji Jadeja were fiercely jealous of the reputation which Lakhaji had built up by virtue of his valour and splendid leadership and, accordingly plotted to dispose of him. Hamirji goaded Tamachi on to invite Lakhaji to a banquet to celebrate his successes and during the course of the festivities, Tamachi murdered Lakhaji but the latter's young son, Rawal escaped. It was not until many years later that Rawal learnt that Tamachi, who struck the fatal blow, had actually been a mere tool in the hands of Hamirji and that the latter had masterminded the entire plot. Thus Rawal decided to invite Hamirji to a banquet, but the latter, fearful of the consequences, accepted on the condition that Rawal swear by the goddess Ashapura, the family deity of the Jadejas, that he would do his guest no harm. Rawal, in whose mind the thought of vengeance was uppermost, took the false oath and Hamirji made his appearance, confident that the promise would be honoured. Predictably, Rawal plied his guest with wine and when Hamirji was too drunk to know what was happening, his throat was slit by Rawal who then seized the dead man's land.

Hamirji's two sons, Khengarji and Sahibji, swore to avenge the death of their father and fled to Delhi to try their hand at winning the favours—and the aid—of Emperor Humayun. However, they were not granted an audience and they waited near his fort for a full year before fate ended their vigil. The Emperor went out lion hunting, followed by a retinue of nobles and soldiers and the brothers decided to follow. When a lion suddenly attacked the royal party, the attendants fled but Khengarji, the lion with a single swing of his paw cut off its ears and tail and then appeared with his brother. Sahibji, in order to find out who had killed the lion, sent out a runner to locate the man who had the ears and tail of the dead lion. It was



A 1908 photograph of Ranji, Prince of Jamnagar

in this way that the boys found their way into the court of Humayun and told him their story. The Emperor promptly ordered one of his generals to accompany the brothers, along with a hundred thousand men, to regain the kingdom of the exiled princes. Jam Rawal, not at all dismayed, prepared to defend himself till one night he had a vision where the goddess Ashapura ordered him to quit Kutch, cross the sea and settle in Kathiawar.

This Rawal did and in the process



Rangmati river, which flowed past Nawanagar

conquered so many kingdoms that it became necessary to create a capital for his land. The story is told that one day he was out hunting when his dogs came across a hare which, instead of running for its life, turned on the dogs and put them to flight. Rawal was so impressed by the hare's behaviour that he decided to build his capital there. He reasoned that men born there would be great warriors with the same spirit as the hare and so Nawanagar was founded in August 1540. Jam Rawal's fort still stands at Rozy Island, about a half-hour drive from Jamnagar town but

it is slowly crumbling to bits and cows wander in and out of the corridors. There is still a rickety stairway one can climb to get to the topmost lookout post, from where the lighthouse is visible, but the place is in a general state of decay.

In Jamnagar city itself, there is a narrow tarred stretch that is grandly called Palace Road, and which owes its name to the fact that it runs alongside Neelam Palace, the onetime residence of the royal family. But even Neelam Palace has felt the ravages of time. The courtyard is overgrown and dusty, windows in the high tower are broken and have been replaced with wooden boarding to prevent the rain from seeping in and ruining the priceless treasures inside. No one stays in the palace now; the former Jani Sahib stays in a two-storeyed building some distance down the road. There is just one retainer who maintains the expanse of the palace and he does his job painstakingly. There is a pile of valuable Persian carpets that have been rolled up and stored in one room to protect them from the rain. Every window pane, each with its crest of the royal family, is free of dust. The interior is immaculately maintained.

Just the room with paintings must be worth a small fortune. There is a portrait of one of the Jams and no matter where you stand in the huge room, it looks as if his shoes are pointing towards you, the result of an optical illusion that turns them through 90 degrees. High up on one wall, so high that you have to crane your neck, is the painting of a young man and woman, whose clothing seems to be transparent. The artist who began the painting started with two nudes and then began painting their clothes on but he had barely started before he died. Another artist was commissioned to continue but he too died before the work could be completed. No one else agreed to take on the task because of the superstition that whoever did so would die. Stories and legends about the palace abound. Parts of the palace were constructed with imported marble and it was noticed in the early part of this century that repairs would have to be carried out. A local artisan, scorning the purchase of foreign marble, claimed that he would produce something similar out of cement. He kept his word and he was so successful in his attempt that the difference cannot be told. When he was asked for his formula he forsook the promise of great wealth and instead died with his secret. Today the perfectly matched repair work remains as the only proof of his brilliance.

The story of Jamnagar is the story of change, of success. Where once there were villages, there are modern bungalows. Where once there were bullock carts, there are cars. Where once there was a royal family, there are shrewd industrialists. But by far the most important change is that where there was once black money in smuggling, today's millions flow in through legal sources. Jamnagar has come clean. ■

Sanjay wins another round

SANJAY Gandhi has won another round of the battle within the Party. He has been able to get nine non-Congress (I) state Ministries and Assemblies dissolved in the face of stiff opposition from a large number of senior leaders of the ruling Party. But this victory cannot by itself increase the political authority and prestige of Sanjay. On a long journey this is just the first step and unless he can reach his goal smoothly and successfully this initial victory may land him in great political trouble.

The goal is to secure a majority in these state Assemblies and get Congress (I) Governments installed in those states. After the victory in the Lok Sabha elections Sanjay Gandhi started demanding that the Ministries in the states in which the ruling Parties had failed to secure a majority vote should be dismissed immediately and fresh polls ordered. He argued that if fresh polls were held in those states immediately the Congress (I) would be able to secure a majority everywhere. He warned that unless a majority of the states could be brought under Congress (I) rule the Central Government by itself would not be able to bring about much change in the country. Rather, the continuance of ineffective and hostile Governments in a majority of the states would ultimately discredit the Central Government because the common man would think that though he had brought back Mrs Gandhi to power she could not do any good for him. Sanjay asserted that to "fulfil the expectations of the people of the country we must have a majority of the state Governments also with us".

The first reaction of Mrs Gandhi was negative. She did not challenge Sanjay's line of argument directly; but argued, "We should not do anything which may create an impression that we are not democrats". She also asked all the Party leaders to recall "what we said when the Janata Government dismissed our state Governments".

Some of the senior leaders of the Party, including Kamalapati Tripathi, were opposed to Sanjay on this issue for quite different reasons. They argued that immediate dismissal of all the Janata and Lok Dal state Governments may bring these two Parties close and they may fight the state elections jointly against the Congress (I). They warned that then the Congress (I) may fail to get an absolute majority in some of the



By BARUN SENGUPTA

states. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, where the Congress (I) could not secure even 40 per cent of the votes in the Lok Sabha polls, were specially mentioned. They suggested instead that the non-Congress (I) states should be taken up one by one so that the Congress (I) can get time and opportunity to consolidate its position.

A third group of Congress (I) leaders pleaded for the continuance of the Karnataka and Haryana method. They calculated that within a year it would be possible to secure an absolute majority in eight or nine state Assemblies through defections and form Congress (I) Governments there. After their success in Himachal Pradesh they fixed Maharashtra, Bihar and Orissa as their targets. Emissaries were sent to Bombay, Patna and Bhubaneswar.

But Sanjay was vehemently opposed to this idea. He said: This method would injure both the prestige and the health of the organisation. We would have to take in a large number of discredited men as our MLA's, Ministers and Chief Ministers. People would not like that. And, such large scale entry of foreign and hostile elements within the Party would ultimately create a difficult situation for us. Those who fought with us during the bad days would not also like a large number of their former adversaries capturing positions of power in our name.

This line of argument was immediately hailed by men like Vasant Dada Patil of Maharashtra, Jagannath Mishra of Bihar and Janakiballav Patnaik of Orissa. Under no circumstances would they like to see Pawar, Das and Routhray as Congress (I) Chief Ministers. They also started demanding fresh elections in the states and in their self interest they also started supporting Sanjay's demand for immediate dissolution of the non-Congress (I) Governments. Sanjay's hands were strengthened.

But Mrs Gandhi was still hesitant. She was still opposed to doing anything which would appear

undemocratic, apprehending that an immediate dismissal of all the Janata and Lok Dal Governments might bring those two Parties closer and thus make it impossible for the Congress (I) to get an absolute majority in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Sanjay of course had no such illusion or fear. He said: We are going for a verdict of the people in the same circumstances in which the Janata Government ordered state elections. Asking for a verdict of the people under completely changed circumstances is not undemocratic. So far as the question of the Janata and the Lok Dal fighting the state elections unitedly is concerned, he said: It is impossible. Rather, there will be a further rift in the Janata Party. And, in multi-corner contests the Congress (I) would get an absolute majority in all the states.

While all these arguments were going on inside the ruling Party the sudden price rise and acute scarcity of essential commodities in various non-Congress (I) states helped Sanjay. Telegrams sent by Congress (I) workers started reaching the Prime Minister's secretariat from different parts of the country. They were all informing their leader: The common man is getting disillusioned very rapidly. He is thinking that though Mrs Gandhi has been brought back there is no change for them.

These telegrams strengthened Sanjay's hands further. He argued again with renewed fervour: If these non-Congress (I) state Governments are not removed immediately the situation would become worse and people would become more disillusioned about our leadership. Sanjay then adopted his old line of action also. Important Congress (I) Ministers and leaders went to Mrs Gandhi and started arguing along the same line—as if they were giving their opinion independently. Ultimately she had to give up her hesitations. She gave her green signal to Sanjay's plan of action. The cabinet sub-committee's meeting was just a formality.

If the Congress (I) can win the state elections it would tremendously strengthen Sanjay's position and prestige within the Congress (I). Most of the Chief Ministers and Ministers would be his men in the real sense of the term. And as a bonus the Congress (I) would be able to get something like a two-thirds majority in the Rajya Sabha by 1981. Then, would it be possible to stop Sanjay from amending the constitution according to his ideas?

Tragedy at Agra

Was the aircraft to blame?



The son of Sqn. Ldr V. S. Mehta, lighting the funeral pyre.



breaking off in the process. The wreckage was a blazing furnace, in which 47 men aboard perished and one survivor, gunner Lal Chand was left fighting for his life.

In terms of personnel, an immense loss. In human terms, an irreparable loss. All but one of the men aboard the ill-fated aircraft were married: 47 deaths and 47 grieving families. A court of inquiry was immediately set up to investigate the cause of the crash and an ex-gratia grant of Rs one lakh was announced for the next of kin of each victim.

There were 50,000 people at the funerals on February 24. Senior military officers, families of the dead and mourners from the city itself. Among the senior officers were Air Marshal T. S. Brar, AOC-in-C Central Command, Major General S. K. Sinha, Major-General R. S. Dayal and Brigadier O. P. Sabharwal of the 15th Independent Para Brigade. At Tajganj Ghat, 35 of the 47 bodies were cremated with full military honours. As the flames were lit, a detachment fired three volleys into the air and buglers sounded the haunting notes of the Last Post, the traditional farewell to a fallen comrade. But the most heart-rending scene came when the body of Squadron Leader V. S. Mehta, the pilot, was cremated. His little son, his head shaved and a small white dhoti draped around him, lit the funeral pyre. His father has been a Master Green, the highest pilot category signifying experience and excellence.

India purchased the first Fairchild Packet as far back as 1953. As a matter of fact, the IAF was the only air force in the world to continue using this type of aircraft after the Korean War. In 1960 experts advised the Defence Ministry to ground them but the Packets were used during the 1962 operations in Leh as an emergency measure. Later, the Packets were used with modifications such as an additional engine atop the fuselage. The irony of the situation is that the IAF pilots refer to it as *kafan ka dibba* (the coffin).

UDAYAN SHARMA, Agra

THE lengthening shadows had already melted into darkness on the evening of Saturday February 22, and the lights of Agra had begun to come on, one after another. At Kneria airport, however, technicians and ground crew in overalls still hovered around the giant shape of the Indian Air Force Fairchild Packet transport aircraft. The Packet had flown two sorties that day and had successfully dropped two batches of paratroopers on

training exercises. This was to be the third and last flight of the day, a night drop for 31 trainee paratroopers and their 12 instructors.

Eyewitnesses recall that the aircraft's rear wheels were only a few feet off the ground at the time of takeoff when the right engine caught fire and lost power. With only the left engine working, the transport plane slewed to one side in mid-air and landed in one of the plantations bordering the tarmac, the right wing

The death of a scientist

Was he disillusioned?

ON January 15, 1980, a brilliant 30-year-old scientist took what now appears to have been cyanide and within minutes life ebbed out of his frail body. Ramkrishna was a scientific officer, SD (senior class one in the salary grade of Rs 1,100-Rs 1,600) in the biology and agricultural division of the Agriculture Biochemistry section of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Bombay.

While the reason for his death is still a mystery, and will perhaps remain one, even his colleagues say that what drove him to suicide was not necessarily dissatisfaction in work, though in all probability it was a contributory factor. Ramkrishna was quite uncommunicative with his parents, he had no friends and since he left no note as to why he was taking his life the mystery will continue. Meanwhile one can just toy around with the clues he left behind. In a bag that he left with a scientist friend, Mr Hanumant Rao, at the latter's Vashi residence there were five letters. Three letters were from his former professor at Pantnagar University and one written in Telugu from his sister. The fifth letter was the one he himself wrote to Rao giving him instructions regarding some financial matters and requesting him to inform his parents about his death only after his body had been cremated.

Ramkrishna obviously was trying to return to Pantnagar University to do his Ph. D. He had done his M.Sc. from there and he had been in correspondence with his professor for a lectureship. In a reply the professor had expressed sadness that Ramkrishna should want to leave a job that earned him around Rs 1,500 for one that would give him only Rs 500 or Rs 600. He, however, said that he would be happy to have him. The professor later wrote to say that he would be leaving for Mexico for a year and suggested to him to try for a fellowship at the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore.

The letter written by Ramkrishna to his sister was in Telugu but it had strangely enough two phrases in English. One was "painful days" and the other "difficulties with superiors". It implies that Ramkrishna was having a tough time with his superiors. This strikes one as surprising, because Ramkrishna had no immediate boss. The head of his department Dr P. V. Sane had been away for a year. It is however true that Ramkrishna wanted to do something more "meaningful" by way of his work.

Recalling Ramkrishna's last painful moments, his colleagues say: "When we came on the scene he was unconscious. The first one to hear his mournful cries was a tradesman who was going to make a phone call from a phone in the room where Ramkrishna lay dying. He saw Ram-

krishna writhing on the floor in pain. He called his colleagues who lifted him and put him on a chair thinking that he may have had a fit. Ramkrishna may have been alive for about 10 minutes more. There is a dispensary a minute away and a visiting doctor was on duty there. We summoned him and he felt his pulse and searched for heartbeats. He was followed by another doctor who said a stretcher should be brought and Ramkrishna taken to a hospital. About this time Ramkrishna started frothing at the mouth. We decided not to wait for a stretcher but carry him down ourselves from the second floor. Five scientists carried him when his temperature started dropping dramatically and most believe he died in their hands." Ramkrishna was, however, taken to the BARC dispensary where the doctors tried to revive him. He was given oxygen. They tried to revive his heartbeat but with no success. One of Ramkrishna's colleagues then told the doctor that he was emotionally rather unstable as a person and it was then that the doctor felt that he may have taken his life with a strong poison. Someone suggested they look for any note he may have left and sure enough a note was found in the right-hand pocket of his trouser.

Then all the formalities started and the police were brought in. Ramkrishna's parents were informed about the death. His father who is in his late Fifties and employed with the Public Works Department in Guntur, was distraught. He was furious about the letter that his daughter had written to her brother. Shocked and pained he incoherently alleged "foul play" on the part of the authorities. But later he was reconciled to the fact that his son had committed suicide. He was accompanied by his wife, a younger son and two of Ramkrishna's uncles. In fact, there had not been any communication between father and son for a long time. The father was not even aware of the position his son held and when told he was filled with pride tinged with tragedy.

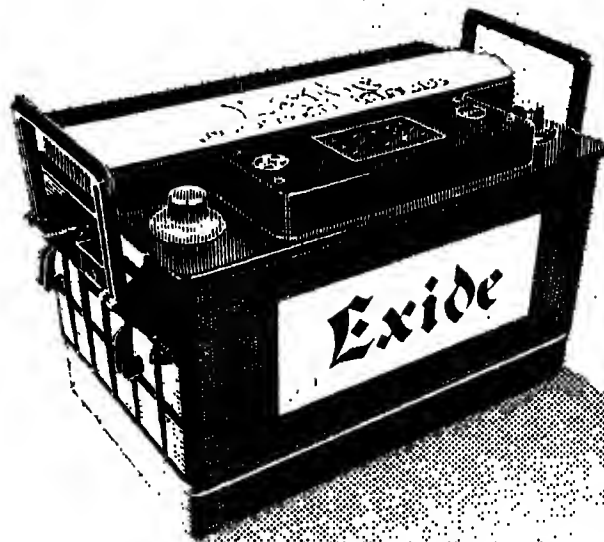
"He had a slightly different kind of personality", his colleagues keep repeating. And this is, of course, not very uncommon at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre. There are a lot of psychiatric cases in BARC and one figure put the average of such cases at 300 to 400 a month. Talking about the fear and suspicion psychosis at BARC, scientists quote a letter written to the director of BARC on January 27, 1978, which says: "there are a number of cases of harassments, dismissals and even imprisonment of young scientists at times on frivolous grounds, even when serious lapses on the part of officials were being condoned and covered up. This had shaken the faith of our members in the fairness and even-

handedness of the authorities. If these tendencies are allowed to grow unchecked they are bound to vitiate the atmosphere here and the resulting climate of fear and intrigue would not be healthy for scientific growth."

Ramkrishna was a scientist of great promise. He was sent to Hungary in 1977. Normally one has to sign a bond for four years when one is sent abroad. So it was rather strange that he was trying to leave BARC in addition to the fact that he was leaving for a salary that was one-third his present one. Ramkrishna was sent to study electro microcopy, but he was more interested in immunology, so he switched over to it. When he returned to BARC he could not pursue immunology as it would mean his transfer to some other department. So he was asked to do photosynthesis—the project on which his section head worked. Photosynthesis is a very important field of study in pure science. Ramkrishna wanted to do something more "meaningful" and not something footnotish. Very simply explained photosynthesis is an important problem because all living beings live off sunlight that is fixed on plants. The entire food chain input of energy comes through the process of photosynthesis. Even coal and oil is based on photosynthesis. The only way to capture sunlight is through photosynthesis. The energy captured by solar cells etc. is very marginal in comparison. So this is a very important process and understanding the basic mechanism of this process is the prize aim of scientists. It would be a great achievement to a scientist if he could unlock the secrets of this process. It is also extremely relevant to Indian conditions because it could be used for increasing foodgrain production particularly since the total area available for foodgrain cultivation is limited. If one can increase or step up the process of synthesis and conversion into carbohydrates one can increase food production without inputs from outside. One can increase the efficiency of photosynthesis by increasing the basic efficiency of a particular leaf so that a bigger fraction can be used of a leaf area. At BARC scientists are trying out which kind of plants are most effective for photosynthesis. Ramkrishna was working on an enzyme in this process and this led him to another idea, namely he wanted to examine the magnetic field produced by a moving charge. This is very difficult to work out because of intricate theoretical calculations involved. His training in physics was not strong enough for this. It was a very ambitious idea. He tried to take the help of some solid-state physicists but things did not progress much.

This probably frustrated Ramkrishna. A scientist likes to own an idea and he gets a great deal of satisfaction and stimulation from it. But Ramkrishna could not get much further because of his own personal academic limitation, and lack of a

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*Still keeps going
when the rest have stopped*

stimulating environment. Had there been a scientifically stimulating atmosphere at BARC it might have helped him through his "painful days". But Ramkrishna had also contacted Mr Govindji, a photosynthesis specialist from the University of Chicago in the United States. Govindji had promised to let Ramkrishna know if he came up with any new ideas related to Ramkrishna's field. But there again there was not much progress. Ramkrishna was obviously overawed and conquered by his difficulties. He was sensitive but lacked the enormous patience and plodding needed to contribute to this frontier level of science. As his more senior colleagues say, one has to be very careful about choice of subjects as one has to look to the overall availability of equipment as well as a competent guide. One needs experience for this. Ramkrishna lacked this experience since he was just 30 and had been with BARC for barely five years. He was not very mature and unable to recognise the limits of functioning at BARC.

And so Ramkrishna embarked on

the road to suicide. It was a premeditated act according to some of his friends. He was thinking about it for at least 15 days prior to January 15. He had almost stopped eating or ate fitfully for the last ten days. He was a poor eater even normally. In fact when he was in Hungary his professor there wrote to his boss here saying that he ate very little and something should be done about it. So his health was poor. In addition he had been talking to friends about the emptiness and uselessness of his work. The routine destabilised him. He started sorting out his drawers, because when he died they found only his library card in it. On the fateful day of January 15 he took some of his friends to the canteen of BARC and gave them coffee. When he paid the bill someone asked him what he was celebrating. He said cryptically: "You'll know tomorrow". Of course, they knew in a few hours. The BARC canteen opens at 11 a.m. and by 11.30 or 11.45 Ramkrishna was dead.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

Delhi's call girl racket exposed

A grisly murder blows the lid

THE brutal murder of a pimp in broad daylight in the posh lawyers' colony in South Delhi, Neeti Bagh, on February 23 has highlighted the proliferating call girl racket in the capital once again. The murdered man, Ram Parkash Shukla, had been in the call girl business for some time. As manager of a large hotel in the heart of the walled city, Shukla used to procure girls regularly for a varied clientele. In the middle of last year, he left his job and got down to being a full-time pimp. Although, Shukla was married and had three grown up children he did not live with his family. His wife and children were left to fend for themselves in Ashok Vihar where his eldest son supported the family. Shukla, meanwhile, wandered around in various places in Delhi, not staying in one place for more than a few days.

On February 13, Shukla came to stay with another man, Harbans Lal Verma, who had just moved into the servants' quarters above a garage in a vacant plot in Neeti Bagh. Verma has allegedly been active in Delhi for nearly a decade as a pimp. His clients ranged from posh hotels to sleazy, hippy hangouts in Pahargani. He was arrested a couple of times before under the Suppression of Immortal Traffic Act. But there was no conviction since the Act was vague about its jurisdiction. Verma, the police allege, had con-



Police interrogating Harbans Verma

tacts in high places. Although he had no ostensible means of livelihood Verma, within a few days of his moving in, was given a temporary telephone connection by the Delhi Telephones. The police are now trying to find out Verma's contact in the Delhi Telephones and exactly how he got a phone so quickly. Verma was married and had children but his family stayed in Shastri Nagar. He has been living with a 23-year-old

woman, Usha alias Asha, for the last few years and had three children by her. Asha and her youngest child—a baby in arms—also moved in with Verma in the Neeti Bagh flat.

Shukla, when he moved in, came along with 22-year-old Radha Rani who was reportedly Shukla's mistress. On February 19, another girl, Mamta, moved into the flat. Mamta was Shukla's contact and had come to Verma's house on his invitation. Mamta had been working for Shukla for some time and had introduced him recently to another girl, Poonam, who had agreed to work for him. Poonam reportedly was married to Kishan Lal who is also allegedly a pimp. On February 21, Kishan Lal came to meet Shukla at Verma's flat. They had a violent quarrel and Kishan Lal left in a huff after threatening Shukla.

The very next day, around 2.30 pm, the police control room passed on a message to the Defence Colony police station that a dead man was lying in 136, Neeti Bagh—Verma's flat. The police arrived around 3.00 pm and found Shukla's body with multiple wounds, lying in a pool of blood. The body had been dragged from one room to the other in the two-room flat. According to the police doctor, the murder was committed any time between 11.30 am and 1.00 pm.

When the police arrived, they found Mamta and Radha Rani in a hysterical state. According to Mamta, two persons had come to see Shukla in the morning. Verma, Asha and Radha Rani had left earlier and Mamta was alone with Shukla in the flat when the two men came. The men started quarrelling and as the tension increased, Mamta locked herself in the bathroom. According to her, she stayed inside the bathroom for three hours since she was afraid to come out. Meanwhile, Asha and Radha Rani returned to the flat around 1.00 pm and found the front door locked from inside. When they heard Mamta's cries of help from inside they jumped in from the balcony. They discovered Shukla's body on the floor and according to Mamta it was only after the two women had come, that she ventured out of the bathroom. According to Radha Rani, when she and Asha found the dead body and heard Mamta's story, Asha went to call Verma who was visiting his ailing father in Wilingdon Hospital. According to Verma, it was he who rang up the police, although the latter claim that it was an anonymous call.

The police are maintaining a discreet silence about whether Mamta actually recognised the two men who came to see Shukla that morning. They, however, went to Ram Kishan Lal's house in Moti Nagar and found it locked. Poonam and Kishan Lal had left. Since, Ram Kishan Lal hails from Gurgaon, the police went there to trace the missing couple but again drew a blank. The police are also working on an alternative theory after they found out that Shukla owed money to some people from Aigarh and they had come to demand it a few days back.

MISS SHARNAM

Indian Dancer

F-23A, FIRST FLOOR
EAST OF KAILASH
NEW DELHI

FASHION SHOWS
CULTURAL SHOWS
MODELLING

A visiting card found at the scene of the murder

While the South Delhi Deputy Police Commissioner, Dr. K. K. Paul, hoped that the police would be able to nab Shukla's murderer soon, he admitted there was inadequate legislation to stop or even take strict action against the call girl trade which has been increasing in the capital for the last few years.

On the day of the murder, two couples were arrested in a New Delhi restaurant where they were indulging in "obscene acts", according to the police. The two girls were reportedly a part of a call girl racket. Two days later, the police unearthed yet another call-girl racket—this time

in a prominent ITDC hotel in central Delhi and arrested four call girls and two pimps. The racket which was highly organized was run through a travel agency in Connaught Place.

Delhi, as the centre of political power, has in the last few years acquired a notoriety of being the happy hunting ground for all sorts of middlemen who strike shady deals. Apart from money, the other most common form of gratification are girls. Call girl rackets have, therefore, sprung up in almost every corner of the city. The girls who mostly come from middle-class families generally want to make some

quick money and easily fall into the clutches of pimps. The usual rates for a night are Rs 200 to Rs 300. The pimp normally gets a major share. Since, the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act bans soliciting in public places, the deals are struck on telephone by the pimp. The client first rings up the pimp, who in turn rings up the call girl and fixes a meeting place. Since nothing actually happens at the pimp's place, the police have no way of proving anything against him while the call girl is free to pretend that her client was her beloved and get away scot free. Even if the police arrest them on a suspicion, there is not much of a case in court and both the pimp as well as the call girl are generally acquitted. "Unless the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act is made more comprehensive we can't completely stop call girl rackets which encourage other criminal activity as well", said South Delhi Deputy Police Commissioner Dr. K. K. Paul. The murder at Neeti Bagh is a good example.

AJOY BOSE, New Delhi

Silent Valley holds its breath

Will it live?

THE fight for the preservation of the Silent Valley is far from over, despite the fiat of the Charan Singh Government to have a fresh look at the proposed hydro-electric plant, and similar sentiments expressed by Mrs Gandhi's Government. The Kerala State Electricity Board is spearheading a vigorous and malicious campaign against those who have been fighting for the preservation of this vast and unique tropical forest. Despite the statutory directive issued by the Kerala Government in January asking the Electricity Board to suspend all its activities connected with the project, the mindless propaganda continues unchecked. The senior board members whose inflated egos have been pricked by the successful campaign by India's renowned naturalists, scientists and conservationists have been wooing local politicians in order to "educate" the public about the project's feasibility and desirability. Now that thousands of illegal Gulf workers are returning to Kerala, the old excuse that the hydro-electric project can offer employment to hundreds, and turn the backward region into an area of prosperity is being forwarded. The *Hindu* which has vociferously attacked the proposed project in a number of editorials and through its well-documented, profusely-illustrated articles is also considered (by the Electricity Board) as an agent of vested interests and naturalists who are described by the Board as armchair world-savers who don't have the guts to go anywhere



near Silent Valley. The fact that a number of botanists and zoologists, helped by alert students, have visited the Valley, and that their activities were monitored by some of the finest scientific brains available is overlooked by the bosses of the Board.

A "Neglect of Malabar Action Committee" (sic) was formed to educate the people that the opposition to the project was engineered by big landowners of Mannarghat and Palghat who want to smuggle precious forest products from Silent

Valley without paying any levy to the Government. The Committee has also produced literature (most of which is in Malayalam) to the effect that these very landowners will have to pay better wages to their labourers if the project starts. As against the current daily wage that fluctuates between Rs 2 and 5, a minimum wage of Rs 10 will have to be paid. The Committee also ignores (deliberately, perhaps) the eventual ecological disaster scientists fear from the project. The argument that the Valley isn't a virgin forest is once again advanced by citing a single example that timber from it was used as early as 1840 to make railway track sleepers. Another argument has it that only 830 out of 39,000 hectares will be utilised for the project. That these 830 hectares are right in the centre of Silent Valley isn't mentioned. The Committee has also claimed that some scientists are, in fact, in favour of the project. Their scientist hero is Dr K. B. Sadasivan who doesn't believe that the impending project will cause ecological doom: nor does he think it is a virgin forest. Says Prof M. K. Prasad, one of the most vociferous academicians supporting the preservation of the Valley: "The remark that Silent Valley has never been a virgin forest is quite unbecoming of any botany professor who knows any fundamental of ecology. The expression "virgin forests" does not mean untouched in the ecological sense but a forest which is still composed of elements which were present when the ecosystem reached the climatic climax". Dr Sadasivan also believes that opium is cultivated in plenty in pockets of the valley. "His belief that opium is cultivated is baseless as the Botanical Survey of India and the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute have refuted it", adds Prof M. K. Prasad.

ARTHUR PAIS, Trivandrum

"There is no chaos in Iran"

SIVAN KANAT interviewed AYATOLLAH HOSSEIN NOORI, a longtime acquaintance of Ayatollah Khomeini and the latter's special envoy, during his unofficial visit to India in January this year.

HAS the attitude of Iran towards India changed with the Islamic Revolution under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini? India has had good relations with Iran during the imperial regime of the Shah who was overthrown by Muslim fundamentalists. Now with the Shah in exile and everything connected with him, an anathema with the present Government in Teheran, what will be the future course of Indo-Iran relation?

Ayatollah Khomeini's special envoy, Ayatollah Hossein Noori, who was on an unofficial visit to India (he arrived on January 17) says that Iran's spiritual leader expects the bilateral relations to further strengthen. Ayatollah Noori, a long-time acquaintance of Ayatollah Khomeini, said in an interview that Iran has deep-rooted cultural and historical relations with India. In addition there are a large number of Muslims in India. "This itself is a factor for our being closer to India." In the mutual relations there is a "feeling of closeness, nearness. This is regardless of religion and creed. The closeness is because you are Indians: your culture and history are like ours, the customs similar", says Ayatollah Noori. There is no reason that both countries should disregard such close contacts. There is no question of weakening of the bilateral relations because of the exit of the Shah. "Our relationship will further grow on a very sound basis, and will further extend".

What does Ayatollah Khomeini think of the fear among neighbouring nations, especially with a large Muslim population, that the Iranian Revolution will spill over its borders. Says Ayatollah Noori: "We are of the opinion that the Islamic Revolution of Iran will not be limited to our country. Certainly it will awaken all the oppressed people of the world". Ayatollah Khomeini has been emphatic that the Iranian Revolution is an Islamic Revolution, and not a national revolution, nor a regional revolution. "It is a God-inspired revolution, inspired by Islam and Koran".

With more than 50 million Muslims in Soviet Union, an apparently worried Kremlin has intervened in Afghanistan and moved towards the Iran border to keep vigil there. What does Ayatollah Khomeini's Iran think of it? Ayatollah Noori says that the Soviet action has angered Iran. Iran's Revolutionary Council has condemned the action because "a Muslim should

Alongside: an unidentified man holds up a small boy whose parents—and the Revolutionary Council—claim had his arms cut off by the Shah's secret police in order to extract information from his father



help as far as he can his Muslim brother, Islamic Governments and Islamic nations". And if Moscow has similar designs over Iran, they will be thwarted under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini. "The people have such faith that no aggressor could ever set foot on the soil of Iran except by decimating all the 35 million people of Iran."

The man who roused the 35 million people and swept the Shah off his Peacock Throne still lives in a sparsely furnished small house. He seldom speaks, but listens. The black turban, black robe and the intensely powerful eyes have become well known the world over. To the outsider, however, Ayatollah Khomeini is a bundle of contradictions. What is his philosophy? He is an ascetic who is humble and arrogant, kind and vengeful, a utopian idealist but a pragmatist. Is he not an enigma?

"No", says Ayatollah Noori who justified the crackdown on the Shah's supporters and the executions. "All great men have different personality traits. In one context they show great magnanimity, in another they are full of anger. In some places they are humble. Ayatollah Khomeini's action should be understood in the particular context." Ayatollah Khomeini wanted those who oppressed and killed innocent people during the Shah's regime to be executed. There is no mercy for them. But he is essentially a very kind man. "This is true of all great men, like Hazrat Ali, the first son-in-law of Prophet Mohammed. Hazrat Ali ordered execution: he would have no mercy on oppressors. The same is true of Imam Khomeini".

Ayatollah Noori asks how Ayatollah Khomeini can forgive a person like the Shah and the members of the SAVAK, Iran's secret police which have killed about 70,000 people and maimed another 100,000. The Shah plundered the nation's wealth. Though Iran is the world's second largest oil producer, a majority of the people spend the nights under the sky, with no education, no employment, no water to drink and no medical facilities. During all these years the Shah and his men have been stacking away money in Western countries, and buying up military hardware to keep them in power while stifling the voice of the people.

Ayatollah Noori wonders how the Western media can plead that Imam Khomeini should show mercy to the Shah as he is ill and dying. The media call Ayatollah Khomeini cruel as he is demanding the Shah's extradition for putting him on trial. The Iranians cannot forgive the misdeeds and crimes during the imperial rule. "You must understand that His Holiness Khomeini is very gentle and humble. He lives simply, loves all the people. He is only against oppressors. He is not an enigma". Ayatollah Noori quoted a verse from the Koran to justify the present Government's action of executing former generals of the

Shah and members of the SAVAK. The Koran says, "Mohammed, the Prophet of God, and his followers are harsh against the oppressors, those who mistreated people and humanity. But to the poor and oppressed they are very nice and kind". Every Muslim and every human being should act in this way, says Ayatollah Noori.

But could Khomeini achieve the objectives of the Islamic Revolution? Ayatollah Noori says that already three-fourths of the objectives of the Revolution have been accomplished with the presidential election of January 1980. With the holding of a popular referendum to form the Government, the first objective was achieved. At the referendum 99 per cent of the people voted for



the Islamic Republic as the form of the Government. The second objective was realised when the people overwhelmingly adopted a constitution few months ago. The third was the presidential election, and the last objective will be the setting up of a national assembly and election of its delegates. The national assembly will enact laws in accordance with the precepts of Islam.

Ayatollah Noori strongly refuted the allegation that the Islamic Revolution unleashed anarchy and chaos and upset the economic development of the country. He says that the so-called stability under the Shah was misleading as it was brought about by strangulating the voice of the people with repressive measures. A visitor to Iran may have seen that all was quiet and calm. "It was not all

quiet and calm. It was like a dormant volcano". At the slightest freedom the Shah allowed, the opposition against him set alight the powder keg on which the dictator was sitting. Ayatollah Noori accused that part of the Iranian wealth looted by the Shah was passed on to the Western media for propaganda that Iran was all quiet under his rule. But in fact what was happening was that anybody who rose up against the Shah was put behind bars, tortured, maimed and killed. The economic progress, the Shah's supporters had been claiming, was a white lie. If the Shah had built schools, hospitals, roads and factories—the index of development—there should be evidence of their existence. "Can any of the reporters who had gone to Iran show us these signs of economic progress?" In the south of Teheran people still live in mud-brick houses and in abject poverty. Over 60,000 villagers do not have the elementary requirements for civilized existence. And all in spite of the oil wealth.

Ayatollah Noori, however, said that there is an element of instability following the Revolution. But it was like the initial disorder following a popular uprising. It is quite natural. Now there is stability. He denied that there is chaos and lack of command in the armed forces. He said that during the Shah's regime the army was used against the people, and only the top brass was around the Shah. There was discontent among the junior officers who wanted to change the army set-up. But after the Revolution the army has become a part of the people, justice has been restored to the army and their condition is much better now. There is perfect unity among the rank and file of the army. In fact people now say that the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces is Ayatollah Khomeini.

Ayatollah Noori also denied allegations that there is conflict and mistrust between the armed forces and the *pasdaran* (the revolutionary guards) numbering about 20,000. When the people gained freedom following the overthrow of the Shah the army was torn apart by the convulsions of the Revolution. There was an urgent need for an organisation to restore security and safety of the people against the remnants of the SAVAK. So young people voluntarily formed the *pasdaran* forces. In the mean time the reconstruction of the army was going on. While the *pasdaran* looked after the safety of the people the army was being purged of undesirable elements. Little by little the gendarmes, the police force and the armed forces were reconstituted under the Islamic Republic. "Till the army becomes powerful and organised enough to safeguard the boundaries and maintain internal security, the *pasdaran* force was necessary. It is not true that there is chaos in Iran. For the first time Iranians can decide what they want.

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The look

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Age tells

By ANIL GROVER

"THE story of the Boat People exposes power politics in its most primitive form," reads one sentence in this engrossing book. The Boat People have revealed "the ruthlessness of major powers, the brutality of nation-states, the avarice and prejudice of people" and "at times, when telling the story of the Boat People it seemed that Indo-China had become the vortex of all that is wrong with mankind".

In 1975, there were 377 Boat People; in 1976, there were 5,619 and in 1977, the figure rose to 21,276. And these were the numbers of safe arrivals in camps in reluctant host countries from Norway to Australia or resettled; not of departures. And they also did not include those who were caught while casting off in waves from Vietnam. But it was not yet a recognised crisis. By the end of 1978, Boat People resettled around the world numbered 106,489 and by July 31, 1979 the figure touched 292,315. Not till then did "powerful factors of politics and history (begin) to bear down upon the Boat People (and) the region and the world (realise) it had a crisis on its hands".

The Age is an Australian newspaper, published from Melbourne, which was approached by the publishers, Penguin Books, and assigned to produce a book rapidly on a phenomenon which was turning more grotesque with each passing week. Unlike Indian "quick sellers", the Age was initially daunted, admits Michael Davie, the paper's editor, in his preface, but took up the challenge when they quickly decided that "we could do it". Bruce Grant, having had a long association with the Age, was asked to summon up his special Asian experience and mastermind the book, assisted by an array of worldwide correspondents including India's Sunanda K. Datta-Ray (an assistant editor of Calcutta's Statesman). Grant is author, but the diplomat, international affairs writer and High Commissioner in India (1973-76), Michael Richardson, the Age's South-East Asian correspondent who has been filing extensive reports on the region for seven years "provided a reporter who could combine exceptional knowledge and extraordinary stamina" and supply the core of the book.

The result of this is the present book, up to date and datelined October 1979, and which came to hand in November 1979 — "the first full account of their (Boat People's) epic: who they are, who profits from their misery and what the complex politi-



cal and social reasons are for their plight". The blurb, without the usual bluster, adds: "Their story is an indictment of the failure of world opinion to act — an omen in a century noted for the dislocation of peoples by ideological conflict and war. It is not only the story of the Boat People, but draws attention to the plight of all refugees". Michael Davie calls them "not merely another desperate swarm of 'displaced persons', but the victims and indicators of a profound regional instability". Two centuries of western ascendancy in South-East Asia came to a stonewall-end with the fall of Saigon in 1975: now the three super-powers (the United States, Russia and China) "hover uncertainly on the South-East Asian periphery, their armed forces approaching each other more closely than anywhere else on earth".

When we now realise the significance of the Afghanistan issue, which exploded suddenly, about a couple of months after the publication of this book, it is easy to agree with the book's prophetic contention: "The Boat People are a warning to the rest of us that the whole region, during the next phase of its history, is liable to become increasingly a source of unrest, anxiety and war".

The book includes maps, statistics (based on UNHCR figures), data and a chronology which one is advised to go through before attempting to read the book: especially those who are not previously familiar with the problem of the Boat People. The matter is meticulously gathered and authoritatively presented, not to speak of a very elegant production, embellished by some photographs which, however, could have been better. There is a very representative poem written by an unknown Vietnamese at a refugee camp in 1978. To quote certain portions: "Lost in the tempests / Out on the open seas / Our small boats drift. / We are the foam / Floating on the vast ocean / We are the dust / Wandering in endless space. / Our cries are lost / In the howling wind. / Without food, without water / Our children lie exhausted / Until they cry no more. / How

many boats have perished? / How many families lie beneath the waves?"

ONE estimate of the percentage of Boat People who perished in four years was up to 50 per cent. Australia's Minister for Immigration, Michael Mackellar, agreed with this estimate, drawing his conclusion from talks with refugees and intelligence sources. "We are looking at a death rate of between 100,000 and 200,000 in the last four years", he said. Other estimates ranged higher and concentrated on what was the special horror, and susceptibility to mishap, of the boats that brought tens of thousands of Chinese from southern Vietnam after March 1978.

There is also a special interest for many Indians and Pakistanis who had the traumatic experience of Partition in 1947, though the despatch from India in the book thinks otherwise, partly correctly. While Lord Carrington's appeals to the then PM Mr Morarji Desai, "drew a blank", Mr Charan Singh's coalition Government which took over soon after, "was too busy trying to survive to attend to world issues". It adds: "The horror stories of Vietnamese privation that made headlines in the western media seem far less gruesome to a people who have lived with refugees suffering ever since India became independent thirty-two years ago. The 9 million Bangladesh refugees who were given sanctuary in 1971 have gone back, while the 80,000 Tibetans who fled with the Dalai Lama are adequately provided for. But India has not yet solved the problem of about 12 million Hindus who were uprooted when the country was partitioned in 1947. The steady flow of dispossessed families...may have dulled India's response to similar tragedies elsewhere. Historical experience and the inherited perspectives of the British Raj also explain India's indifference to events in South-East Asia; rather, Indians react more readily to developments in the West."

The Boat People: an Age investigation with Bruce Grant (Penguin Books, US \$ 3.50)



Rekha: always the child woman

A MAN who has been knocking around Bombay wanted to produce a film with the intention of making big money in a short time. He approached a financier with his intended cast: ex-luninary Kajesh Khanna and Hema Malini. The financier snorted and said that a film with Hema Malini was not a sound business proposition and that Hema had lost her grip on Bombay films long ago. The shrewd financier however added: "Go, get hold of Rekha if you can. She can bring in the money you want. With Rekha there, even the hero doesn't matter". Seven hits in a row, and a few of them still running to packed houses is Rekha's

record to date. So, in the words of the trade sharks, Rekha is today's Number One

INCIDENTALLY, has anybody noticed Rekha's immaculate take-off on Jaya Bhaduri and Amitabh Bachhan in *Chubsoorat*? In this film Rekha has acted the little girl with two plots (like Jaya in *Guddi*) and has also copied Amitabh's song-picturisation as well as his hairstyle. Rekha has thereby proved that she can out-do Jaya in her own style and has also exhibited her obsession with Amitabh. Anyway, Rekha is used to issuing frequent statements about her crush for Amitabh.

I SAID sometime ago that Muntaz was perhaps toying with the idea of doing a film or two in Bombay. By now, everybody knows about it. Muntaz is making the rounds of places she knew so well before she left films and is looking up old friends and trying to influence new ones. With the beautiful look she has acquired, bagging plum roles should not be much of a problem for her. But what about her husband's millions? Have they rubbed off or staled? She was seen enjoying herself thoroughly with her baby daughter during Rushi's marriage but there was absolutely no sign of her husband, Madhvan.

PLENTY of new rumours are being spread around about Zeevat Aman and the new men in her life. Some say it is Feroze Khan, others insist it is Imran Khan. And while she is busy

recuperating from the two-year nightmare she has been through, she has no time to even think of another man. She states that some interested people continue to link her name with this and that man — to prove all the maligning stories they have been circulating about her.

ONE star we have not heard much about lately is Vidya Sinha. She blew in like a strong wind with the rash of Basu Chatterjee's films which clicked thankfully, stayed around to prove to some people that she could act, but exhibited the most atrociously non-filmi behaviour, like no no false goodness dripping out onto unnecessary people etc. And like a strong wind which also blows away, she seems to have blown away to oblivion. She has very few films on hand and she may even take up some good character roles if they come her way.

*Vidya Sinha's strange mobility:
From female lead to
character roles*



Gitan Shukla



Ashok

SRIDEVI remained the most successful heroine in Tamil and Telugu films throughout 1977. In Telugu, she started by pairing with V. T. Rama Rao in a number of hits and in Tamil she was seen in two super hits, *Kalyana Ramam* (with Kamalanasan) and *Dharma Puthram* (with Rajnikant). The success of these films helped to wipe out the humiliation she suffered due to the short run of her only Hindi (mis) adventure *Swan Sawan*. And 1980 so seems to be a very promising year for her. Stated for early release is an expensive production in Telugu *Kaksha* being produced by that lucky producer D. Rama Naidu. "It's an exciting role and she's presented in dazzling costumes", said Rama Naidu. Snoban Banu and Murali Mohan are also cast in the film which Naidu will soon be making in Tamil, probably with Sivaji and Sridevi. Also awaiting release is *Varumayin Niram* by V. V. Srinivas, a film dealing with the problem of unemployed youth, directed by K. Balachander. Surely Sridevi

can be expected to maintain a steady lead over her nearest rival, Sripriya. And if she can maintain her slim figure she might be the most sought-after heroine for the next five years.

THEY (her detractors) used to say that Hema wasn't true to her soil: that she wasn't interested in accepting Hindi films made by Madras producers. Why did she then accept *Do Aur Do Paanch?* Years ago she was seen in another Hindi film made in Madras "Gehri Jaal" with Amitabh and Jeetendra, and now she's working in D. Rama Naidu's *Bandish* opposite Rajesh Khanna. They were also seen together in Rama Naidu's hit *Prem Nagar*. This time producer Naidu is spending a fabulous sum. He says, "If *Amar Deep* was a comeback vehicle for Kaka, I want my *Bandish* to be a comeback hit for both Kaka and Hema".

WHOEVER says that MGR didn't have the grace to greet Sivaji Ganesan's

son when the latter got married in January is just being malicious. MGR didn't turn up for the wedding, true, but he did send his trusted lieutenant R. M. Veerappan for the reception.

JAYANTHI, who began her career as a heroine in Kannada films and then graduated to Telugu films, is struggling to stage a terrific comeback but the spare tyres round her waist and age have gone against her. She had hoped that *Devathai* her last released Tamil film will do well but it fizzled out after three weeks.

Now one hears that Telugu actor-producer *Giri Babu* is taking interest in her revival. Well, one hopes that everything will be all right. Years ago another filmmaker *Peketi Sivaraman* used to monitor her career but when they parted company few years ago more bitterness was evident than in the separation of Bombay's Helen and P. N. Arora.



Padmapriya

THE latest one in Kamalahasan's family to take up acting is his sprightly niece *Suhasini* who was doing a course in photography at the Adayar Film Institute. She's the heroine in *Nenjalk Killathay*, a romance story filmed by J. Mahendran for Devi films. She's cast opposite another new actor, *Mohan*. And her uncle *Chandrabhasan* is also acting in a film being directed by C. Rudraya with Kamalahasan in the lead.

WHEN MGR left the DMK years ago, some over-enthusiastic Party-workers wouldn't allow his new films to be released. But MGR's followers remained stubborn, and one film *Ulagam Sutrum Valiban* was released under police protection. MGR's sidekicks fear the same situation may arise again when (and if) a new MGR film is to be released. But the DMK leaders seem to be very confident of fighting him politically and devious efforts may not be made to stop his new films from being screened.

PIOUSJI



A scene from Gopalkrishnan's "Kodiyettom"

LIVING

Paying lip service to kissing



Vasant Sathe

Never did one single statement create such a ripple—nay, a wave—of speculation throughout the country. When Information and Broadcasting Minister Vasant Sathe announced on February 27 that kissing, performed artistically and presented naturally, would no longer be censored in Hindi films, everybody licked their lips in anticipation. Not so long ago, a well-known Hindi novelist who provides the themes for "romantic" films said "Salim-Javed are making their mo-

ney, but wait till real romance enters the films. Once kissing is legalised people will ask for bedroom scenes and I will be right on top". Sathe's bombshell was greeted with no less enthusiasm within the industry. Suddenly everyone has become an artistic, realistic film maker. Producers are already going into huddles to discuss the possible themes that could centre around that magic touch of lips. It seems as if everyone in film-land is bowing down at the altar of the great god Kiss.

The Holi spirit



Balkishan and Balbir Singh

Saturday, March 1, saw the second leg of the semi final matches at the recently-concluded Hockey Nationals at Cuttack. Being Holi, it also saw a lot of light-hearted antics among players and

officials alike. Balbir Singh, the ex-Olympian, arrived at the camp on his scooter, and went upstairs to meet the selectors and other officials. One of the people he met was Dayanand, the secretary of the Indian Hockey Federation, the other was Balkishan Singh, another ex-Olympian who is currently the chief hockey coach at the National Institute of Sports, Patiala. As Balkishan's forehead was smeared with the traditional *abir*, a camera shutter clicked. Luckily for us, Nikhil Bhattacharya, the staff photographer of *Sports-world*, was on the spot once again.

Hooray ! (hic)

Carnival time in Goa once more. And just a couple of days before the three-day pre-Lenten festival that is almost orgiastic in its intensity, Goa's new Government announced the relaxation of prohibition, reducing the number of dry days to just one. Just one! The sense of timing, adds Mario Cabral e Sa, was perfect. From the myriad taverns dotting the length and breadth of Goa, there arose a chorus of thankful "Hosannas" to the new political deities in the miniscule Olympus. The situation was—to quote from the Bible—"as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end". So if you want to drink feni or palm toddy you can do so all day and all night—except one day and night, of course.

Drinking in Goa has a legitimacy bestowed on it by the Bible itself, for when the hosts at Cana ran out of wine, the Blessed Virgin asked Christ to help and He turned plain water into wine. Goans think this is just wonderful and there must

surely have been plenty of them who tried their hand at the same thing. Goans attribute their own bonhomie and *raison d'être* to their drinking. In addition, they also believe that they got unscathed through two world wars, three flu epidemics and two bubonic plagues only thanks to good old feni. Feni is also a wonderful cure for anything in Goa; upset tummies and toothaches. It even helps expectant mothers get over their labour pains.

On February 16, when the sun hid behind the moon, it was heaven's way of bestowing a bonus on good Goans. The Goans naturally had to celebrate this celestial blessing. The traditional sundowner became a double that day—and a pretty generous double at that—in keeping with the spirit of astronomy. Tipplers cast aside the proffered goggles and strips of exposed film and instead viewed the skies through tumblers of rum and Thums Up. Never, we presume, was a solar corona so colourful.

Ministering to the fans



What does the future hold for MGR? Now that his two-and-a-half-year-old AIADMK Ministry has been dismissed in Tamil Nadu, it seems quite likely that he will turn to films once again. It might be remembered that in early 1978, MGR had sought the permission of Morarji Desai, the then Prime Minister, to resume his career in acting, so the possibility of his return to filmdom once more seems on the cards. However, Arthur Pais discovers that there is not much excitement being generated by the possibility. For one thing, heroes like Rajnikant and Vijayan have generated massive interest at box offices in the state, to the extent that both actors have created some sort of joint record for fan followings. It is going to be difficult for the bald, pot-bellied veteran to try and win back his old admirers in the face of such determined—and stiff—opposition.

A Boon to Indian readers



Perhaps the most unique thing about the Mills and Boon publishing house is that it sells its own name rather than the names of its respective authors. Paul Scherer, Managing Director of Mills and Boon Inc, is proud of this fact. On a visit to Bombay in February, he told Ashish Rajadhyaksha "Mills and Boon have evolved a distinctive style and we publish books that only follow that style. We have built a readership and they are people who have begun to depend on us increasingly for their reading needs. We cannot let them down".

Scherer was in India to explore the possibilities of Mills and Boon titles being reprinted here. As the situation stands now, India imports 2,000 copies (the maximum permissible) of all Mills and Boon titles. To quote a proud Macmillan's PRO "they are the fastest selling titles going". Wealthy dowagers, peachy keen bobbysoxers, schoolgirls, they all scream for more—and more. Mills and Boon books are even being stocked in school libraries so that The Habit may now be inculcated that much faster.

It is also Scherer's intention that Mills and Boon should start printing books by more Indian women authors. As a matter of fact, Meera Tarneja's *Indian Epicure* and Mrs Balbir Singh's *Indian Cookery* have been steady sellers, but the grapevine has it that a writer from Calcutta is currently working on a full-length novel.

Cone culture

Kiskis. Choco-lust. My My Ooh Ooh. Couplets. Wheel Sundaes. Now what could all of those possibly have in common? They are all varieties of ice cream at Calcutta's very first ice cream parlour, Sub Zero. The popular gastronomic haven first opened its doors to the public on December 9 last year and distributed free ice creams from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. after which it began regular sales. Business has certainly been brisk, as the hordes of customers who always crowd the cash counter will testify. The second such venture in the city, Flury's Ice Cream Parlour, opened on December 23, exactly a fortnight later and only about half a furlong away from Sub Zero.

Rakesh Sharma, the young, ebullient manager of Sub Zero explains that the ice cream parlour craze finally reached Indian cities long after it caught on overnight throughout the length and breadth of the United States. Ice cream parlours first sprouted in Delhi in the mid-Seventies and soon after, became a fairly big attraction in Bombay as well. The seven Ghai brothers who own the Kwality chain of restaurants were the first to recognise the possibilities



of succeeding in the ice cream parlour world. So Nerula's in Delhi became the first ice cream parlour in the country in 1973, followed by Yankee Doodle at the Hotel Nataraj in Bombay, and finally Sub Zero in Calcutta. But that is not the end of the story. The Ghais intend to open some more parlours at Lucknow, Allahabad, Amritsar and Dehra Dun.

Sharma had an interesting story to tell Syed Nisar Mehdi Abdi about the sales at Sub Zero on the day of the eclipse. They opened an hour earlier than normal, at 10 a.m. and closed at midday. When they reopened at 6 p.m., there were queues of people waiting outside. It looks as if another Ice Age is here—for keeps.

Come East, young man

Poland really seems hell-bent on a cultural invasion of India. No sooner had Jerzy Grotowski left our shores than we have in our midst one of the biggest names in European cinema: Krzysztof Zanussi. The director of *Camouflage*, *The Balance* and *The Structure of Crystals* is making a sequel to one of his earlier films, the much-acclaimed



Spiral, for which a sequence is to be shot in India.

"Once I manage to get out of this ghetto of elegant hotels", he says, "I shall try to capture that mystical quality of India as a land where my protagonist, a man obviously dissatisfied with the material values around him, comes to seek solace. I hope that the Indian film will not be a tourist brochure, or in any way a simolistic, banal image. I

will try to capture the reality of India and the spirit of contentment that pervades its philosophy." Zanussi is convinced, unlike other film directors from Europe, that there is no future for the good film maker on the 'capitalistic' circuit of the West. "Yes, I do know that there is a lot more money there. When I meet my friends Roman Polanski or Milos Forman—people who have migrated to America in the belief that it is a better place for film making—I see that they have not benefitted at all. First, they have to recover the money they spend on the making of their films. Second, they are catering to an audience that does not really need their films. If Forman makes a film, they see it. If he doesn't, they forget about him. My own case is different. There is a definite audience that will look forward to my films with an anticipation that spurs me on to better work."

Zanussi is currently filming at Bombay and Pune. In Pune he will be working with the Film and Television Institute, who might provide characters for local scenes. But Zanussi is including no speaking parts for Indians. The reason is simple. "The reality of India is in its natural environment. I cannot duplicate that with professional actors."

Experiments with self

One of the more worried men in Bombay in the last week of February was Bimal Dutt, whose award-winning film, *Kasturi*, has finally been released by the Film Finance Corporation. This comes close on the heels of prolonged negotiation with commercial distributors and though, to all practical purposes, the FFC has borne the risk of the film's commercial future, there is still plenty to furlow the broad brow of the film maker. In fact, his very future is at stake, according to Ashish Rajadhyaksha.

Kasturi was completed in 1978, with the help of an FFC loan of Rs 3,50,000 and hit the headlines soon after. In the same year it shared with *Junoon* the award for the best film of the year at

the National Film Awards ceremony. Some film critics, however, insist that this was an unfair assessment of Dutt's film, which they rate as superior to *Junoon*. But Dutt was not as lucky as Benegal and his film remained in the can for almost two years, while the interest on the loan from FFC mounted steadily. A point has now been reached where Dutt himself stands to gain practically nothing from the release of the film.

The 53-year-old Dutt used to be a scriptwriter for Hrishikesh Mukherjee and scripted the films *Anupama*, *Satyakam*, *Anand* and *Mili*. He does not feel it is too late to start on a career making films. "For me," he says, "life has so far been one adventure after another."

THE WORLD

Last will ?



American hostages

While the American hostages languished in the American Embassy in Teheran, the conscience-keeper and de-facto head of Islamic Iran, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini remained confined to bed in the Heart Hospital in north Tehran. He is a weak man who feels that the time has come for him to go back to his creator. He told his followers: "I see myself in the last days of my life, and when I go back to the next world, I will do it with confidence in your character". That he has confidence in those ruling Iran presently is evident since the president, Abolhassan Bani Sadr announced some time late last month that the Ayatollah had himself approved of a secret plan to end the siege at the Embassy. Although

the Ayatollah has not said anything himself, whisper has it that the hostages may soon be released. And Khomeini alive holds the key to their release. Whatever Ted Kennedy might say of the "fumbling" of the US President, Jimmy Carter simply refuses to be outdone. Immediately after the siege he got State Department officials to contact the three French lawyers — Christian Bourguet, Bertrand Valette and Francois Cheron — who handle Iran's financial affairs and who also processed the Shah's extradition proceedings. The officials and lawyers have been holding the continuous meetings. Hostages, take heart. You have Jimmy Carter, Ayatollah Khomeini and so many others on your side.

The doom merchant

The world has a date with destiny, only nineteen years from now. On August 18, 1999, the planets surrounding the sun will take up positions in the shape of a cross. What has been proclaimed the Grand Cross phenomenon was predicted by Professor Hideo Itokawa, the pioneer of Japan's rocket technology. Fittingly enough, the Japanese were the first nation to learn of this awesome prediction in the course of a documentary on the idiot box. According to the Japanese professor this extraordinary occurrence in the solar system will probably augur the end of all human

life.

Way back in December 1979, the professor had predicted that total devastation of the environment would take place by 1999, by which time there would be no food or energy resources left. This prediction was made in a work of fiction entitled *Case-D*. He is certainly in good company. Even that great French physician Nostradamus had forecast the end of the world in 1999. And remember, Nostradamus had predicted the coming of a man called Hitler, except that he spelt it "Hfslr", the great fir of London and the end of the world in 1999!

Mountainous secret

Were Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay really the first people to climb the mighty Mount Everest? Perhaps not. A pair of English climbers, George Leigh Mallory and Andrew Irvine may have beaten them to it by nearly 30 years. The mystery stems from the fact that no one ever saw the pair of British climbers again. The last person to see them was professor Noel Odell, the geologist of the Mallory expedition. That was on June 8, 1924, when they were visible as two specks some 800 feet below the summit.

The world took for granted, the fact, that Hillary and

Tenzing were the first men to climb Everest, but this theory might just be proved wrong later this year, when a Japanese team tackles the slopes of Everest. If they find the body of an "English climber" that was sighted by a Chinese mountaineer previously, the riddle could be solved once and for all. If the body is indeed that of either Mallory or Irvine, the next step will be to try and locate their film-camera and film. Experts believe that the film could still be intact after 56 years and if they are right, some of the frames might show Mallory or Irvine at the summit.

From White House to "What house?"



It's been one long road for the "hero" of Watergate. At last he can rest his weary feet and live in connubial

bliss now that he has taken up residence in his 19th century \$7,50,000 four-storey house in Manhattan, New York. That Richard Nixon and his wife are historical monuments was amply proved by the fact that there were a few sightseers who came to see the former US President when he came to the Manhattan house. While there was one group which welcomed him there was another which proposed exchanging the ex-President for the 53 American hostages in Tehran. Fearing that the reception would be a shade hostile Nixon decided to close the doors and windows of his house and left town for the weekend.

Holy smoke !

Casanova did not die. In fact, he was jailed for eight-and-a-half months on February 26, 1980 in Genoa. Don Luigi Casanova is a Roman Catholic priest who was allegedly involved with a woman. He was accused of carrying a gun so that he could protect himself against the woman's husband who suspected him of carrying on a clandestine affair. However, Don Casanova set everything right while he was waiting for the verdict. Said he: "It's all untrue.

There never was anything between us except friendship. She came to my home sometimes but always with the baby, and we left the windows open". And before the verdict he mentioned that he knew "nothing about these things. They could give me 30 years. But I am no criminal, I have never fired at anyone". Whatever might be the stories around this incident Don Casanova certainly displayed his tastes—Mrs Maria Tina Bonnana is a brunette!

Too Young to be a diplomat



Andrew Young

Remember that angry young man who created a furore when he supported the Palestinians as the US ambassador to the United Nations. It's none other than that controversial Andrew Young. Well, last week he went to Algeria—not representing his country nor any organisation. He toured refugee camps near Tindouf in support of the Polisarios or the Popular Front for the Liberation of Western Sahara. He had "come to get to know you (the Polisarios) as friends and to tell you that when the American people get to know you, they too will be your friends". There he rode a camel, rested in a huge desert camp and enjoyed himself to a feast of songs and dances. And he became a lovable character. At least he was to the wo-

men who sang: "Andy Young is lovable and the people will not forget him." However, he just might not be lovable and will definitely not be forgotten in a hurry. Those who have him on their minds are the US State Department and Morocco's King Hassan who are sworn enemies of the Polisarios.

It all began when Hassan annexed the Western Sahara colony. The Polisario rebels with the backing of Algeria and Libya carried out devastating raids on Hassan's army. The Carter administration lent a helping hand to King Hassan by supplying him with Cobra helicopters and F-5 fighter jets to crush the rebels. Well, now the Polisarios have more than a good political friend in Andrew Young since he told them: "...you shall be free and you shall prevail".

Ballot box editor

They required 440 votes out of 734 to elect a new editor. That was how the journalists of the internationally famous French daily, *Le Monde*, wanted it to be. So they got together for two long evenings in the last week of February, in a girls' school in Paris to vote for a new editor. The 35-year-old daily with a circulation of 4,38,000 is owned by the employees and the share of the editorial staff gives them the decisive voting rights on who is to edit it. Prior to this round of discussions there were three rounds of voting and the journalists in Paris were joined by their colleagues in the provinces and abroad. After a lot of heart-searching they had come up with five names. One of the nominated, in

utter humility, confessed that he did not have the makings of an editor, and stepped down. The others left in the fray were: Andre Fontaine, the chief foreign policy commentator; Jacques Amalric, the foreign editor; Jacques Decornoy, assistant editor and Claud Julien, editor of the weekly *Le Monde Diplomatique*.

In the first polling M Andre Fontaine and M Jacques Decornoy were defeated by the other two. However, in the next two polls neither M Claud Julien nor M Jacques Amalric managed to get the required number of votes. So the staff of *Le Monde* have decided to continue their campaigning for their favourites for the next three months and then they will try again.

Fanning the flames

Fanny Ashkenazi caused a major upset among diplomatic and foreign ministry circles of Israel in the last week of February. This was when the historic exchange of ambassadors between Israel and Egypt was announced. And it had nothing to do with diplomacy. It started when Israel's ambassador to Egypt, Dr Eliahu Ben-Elissar wanted his secretary, Miss Fanny Ashkenazi, to accompany him to Egypt since she had worked with him for seven years and knew about his "eccentricities". She was all ready to leave on the jet plane when the foreign ministry started flexing their muscles. They said she could not go because an ambassador's secretary had to be from their department. And since Fanny had been on the staff of Dr Ben-

Elissar's office when he was director general of the Prime Minister's office, she was on the payroll of the PM's office not the foreign ministry. The diplomatic personnel won unanimous support among their members for a firm stand against the secretary. But the ambassador was adamant. So the committee of the foreign ministry personnel sued the state while appealing to the labour court. They also sued the ministry and the ambassador. The court gave an interim ruling. It said that the secretary could accompany the ambassador for the first three weeks and she will have no "rights to the status of (a) foreign ministry employee". Lawyers are planning ways in which Fanny Ashkenazi can be kept for more than three weeks in Cairo.

Oh, Gord!

Remember Gordon Greenidge, the hard-hitting West Indian batsman who got a century on his Test debut? That innings was worth 107 against India at Bangalore in 1974-75. Well, Greenidge has been piling up his runs pretty high ever since. Halfway through 1978 he reached a momentous landmark, when he scored the 15,000th run of his car-

eer. That was a good year for him: he got five successive tons (including a double century) and also succeeded in scoring for his county, Hampshire, the fastest century for the Lawrence Trophy. It was an awesome innings of 133, of which the first hundred came in only 82 minutes. Also, that year he won the John Player League award



of £200 for hitting the most sixes (20) of the tournament, five of which came in his last innings. Despite the impressive Test aggregate, Greenidge has only got five Test centuries to his name. It seemed as if the sixth was well within reach during the recently concluded Second Test against New Zealand. Alas, that was not to be and the West Indian batsman holed out at 97 in a match where there were five tons scored.

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The Contest

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This is all you have to do

On the entry form are displayed sets of entwined fingers. These fingers when held in front of a light would, as you know, form a definite shadow in the outline of a man, an animal or bird.

For example, take the first picture. The shadow cast is that of a man wearing a cap on his head (as shown). Now there are 3 animals and 2 birds which you have to identify and just write the name of the animal/bird in the box provided below the picture. To help you identify, just form your fingers as shown in the respective pictures, place before a light, and presto, the shadow will cast the answer. Simple, isn't it?

To give you a tip, the shadows are that of a Swan, Dog, Elephant, Stag and an Eagle. Now we can go thus far and no further.

After you have written the answers, write a catchy slogan., 'It's a brighter

life with Bengal Lamps because..... in not more than 15 words.

Important

Every entry must be accompanied by a 40W, 60W or 100W Bengal Lamps GLS Clear wrapper or Bengal Lamps Superwhite wrapper and the cash memo.



Bengal Superwhite

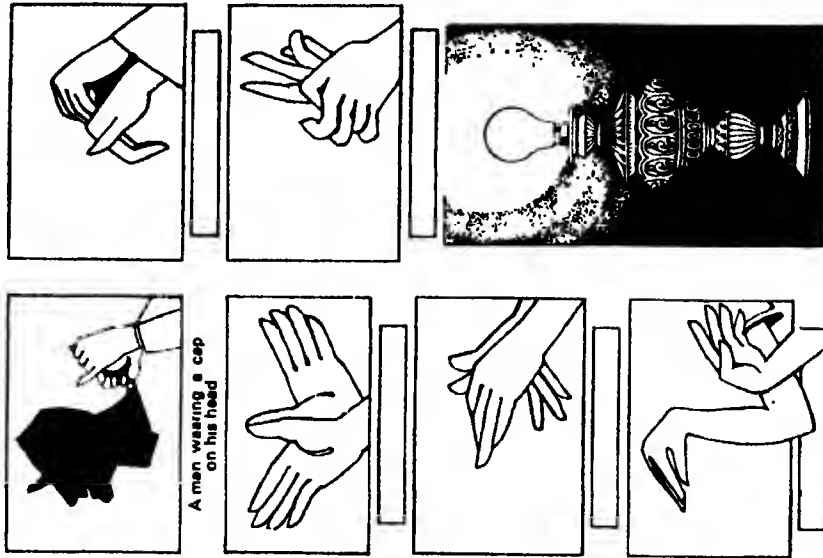


Bengal GLS

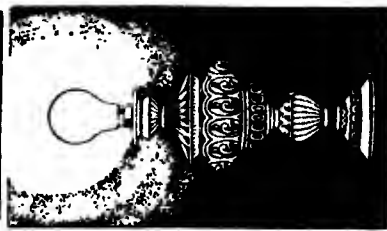
After all is said and done, fill in the coupon below, tear along the dotted line and mail your entry, wrapper and cash memo superscribing the envelope Bengal Lamps' "Light and Shade" Contest, The Bengal Electric Lamp Works Ltd., Corporate Head Quarters, 4, Fairlie Place, Calcutta-700 001

RULES

1. A contestant may submit any number of entries. Each entry must be accompanied by a 40W, 60W or 100W Bengal Lamps GLS Clear lamp wrapper or Bengal Lamps Superwhite wrapper and cash memo.
2. A contestant will be entitled to only one prize.
3. To make allowances for postal delays all entries must arrive on or before April 10, 1980
4. Defective or incomplete entries become invalid.
5. We undertake no responsibility for entries lost, delayed or damaged in transit.
6. Entries must be sent by ordinary post only. NOT BY REGISTERED POST OR HAND DELIVERY.
7. All entries become the property of The Bengal Electric Lamp Works Ltd.
8. The decision of the judges shall be final and binding on the participants NO CORRESPONDENCE WILL BE ENTERTAINED
9. Winners will be notified through press announcements and by letters sent under certificate of posting.
10. The contest is open to all Indian citizens excepting the employees of The Bengal Electric Lamp Works Ltd. and associated companies (their families) and their advertising agents, AdSystems Romed Limited.



A man wearing a cap on his head



Coupon

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(Please use block letters)

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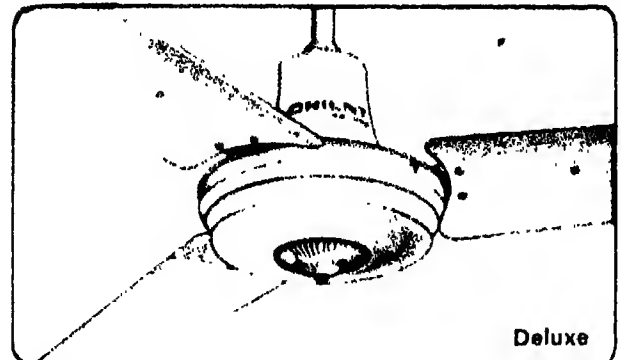
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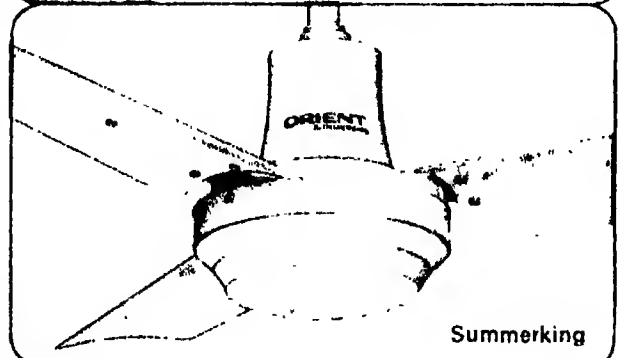


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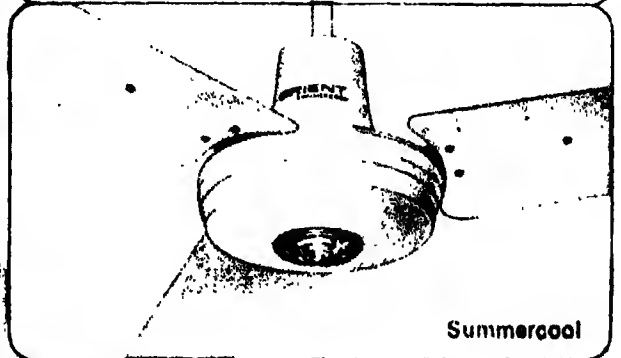
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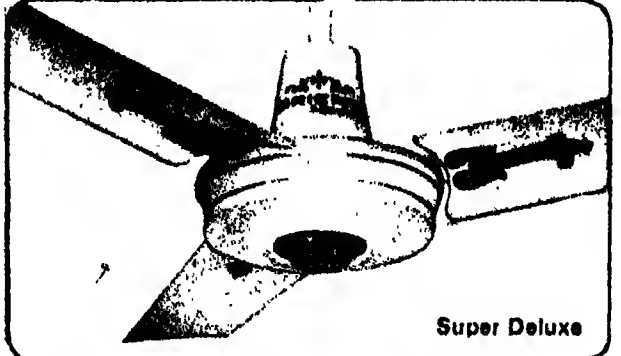
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Beginning March 9

This week the Sun, Kethu and Mercury are in Aquarius, Venus is in Aries, Rahu, Mars and Jupiter are in Leo, Saturn is in Virgo and Neptune and Uranus are in Scorpio. The Moon will be moving through Sagittarius, Capricorn and Aquarius from Scorpio.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Some good fortune will come your way. You are advised to be careful in your professional pursuits. Property matters should be dealt with discreetly. Do not spoil good opportunities by impulsive decisions and erratic actions. Attend to your profession. Peruse all correspondence carefully. Avoid litigation. A short journey is indicated. The weekend will be a pleasant one. **Good dates:** 11, 12, 13 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 6 and 11. **Favourable directions:** West and North.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) This will be a week of mixed fortunes. Your associates are likely to let you down and thus cause mental agony. They may also level false allegations against you. Do not take hasty decisions. The domestic front will not pose any problems. However, be restrained in your dealings with persons of the opposite sex. The time is not yet ripe for you to seek transfer or promotion. **Good dates:** 10, 12 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 7 and 4. **Favourable direction:** North-east.



GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) The stars favour your progress. An old friend will render good service. Seek and act upon the advice of elders. New interests contribute to your happiness. Financial affairs will show improvement. Conserve some of your extra resources. Someone in the family may fall sick. Medical expenditure is indicated. A good week for love and matrimonial affairs. **Good dates:** 11, 12, 14 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 6. **Favourable directions:** West and North.



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) This week new friends will enter your life and contribute to your happiness. A measure of financial success is indicated but do not be careless in buying stocks and handling business correspondence. Children and womenfolk may cause some anxiety. You may meet your old friends. Avoid doubtful love adventures. **Good dates:** 9, 10, 13 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 10. **Favourable direction:** North.



LEO (July 23 — August 22) You will face a number of problems. Keep away from speculation and extravagance. You may suffer severe losses on the financial front. You must settle old debts before embarking on new ventures. Do not be irritated if progress is slow and your health remains unsatisfactory. You may undertake a short journey. **Good dates:** 12, 14 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) A person of the opposite sex will contribute to your happiness. The domestic front will continue to present a pleasant picture. Control your temper. Forge ahead on all fronts. Take reasonable risks. You will benefit through relatives and new friends. Promotion may be round the corner. A sudden change of residence or profession is shown. **Good dates:** 9, 10, 11 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 3. **Favourable directions:** South and West.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) The next few weeks should prove very lucky for you. You may, however, face some problems on the business front. This should prove a lucky period for love and romance. The domestic front will remain a source of joy. This period is particularly favourable for business expansion and investments. Conserve your resources and check extravagant tendencies. Some people will find employment. **Good dates:** 10, 11, 12 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 6. **Favourable directions:** North and East.



SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) You will be able to solve your pending problems involving finance. Courage, faith and fortitude will help you greatly to successfully tackle these problems. A good week for love and matrimonial correspondence. Your home front will remain pleasant. Professionals are likely to get transfer orders. A happy weekend is forecast. **Good dates:** 9, 11, 13 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 7. **Favourable direction:** East.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) An unexpected journey is expected to help you in finding profitable business contracts. You may expect greater financial returns but exercise caution and circumspection while dealing with the opposite sex. Suits and debts will cause anxiety and easy solutions may not be available. Seek and act on the advice of elders. Check all extravagant tendencies and keep your temper under control. **Good dates:** 10, 12, 14 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 7 and 4. **Favourable direction:** West.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Those in service may be promoted. This period is favourable for romance and marriage. A happy surprise is in store for you. Some people will win lotteries. Pay all old debts. You are, however, advised to guard against over-optimism and deception. Let your own intuition guide you. Take every possible advantage of favourable stellar influences. **Good dates:** 10, 11, 14 and 15. **Lucky numbers:** 5 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) The results may not be in keeping with your efforts. Both physical and mental strain will be experienced. Speculation or gambling is unlikely to pay off. Suits and debts will cause anxiety and you may not find an easy solution. Business deals will bring in some profit. Do not embark on doubtful love adventures. **Good dates:** 11, 12 and 14. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 3. **Favourable directions:** South and West.



PISCES (February 20 — March 20) Happy events will take place in the family. Friends and relatives will visit your home. You will find solutions to some pending problems. An unexpected journey is likely. You will find new business contracts. Make new plans and forge ahead on all fronts. Keep your temper under control. **Good dates:** 9, 10, 11 and 13. **Lucky numbers:** 1 and 10. **Favourable directions:** East and North.

M. B. RAMAN

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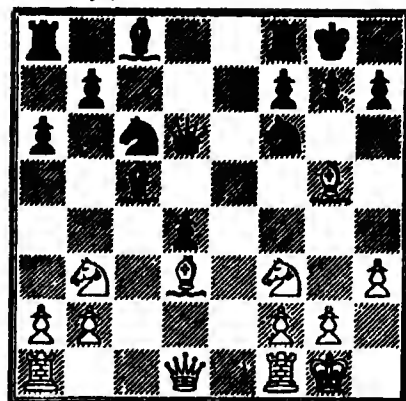
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chess

McCarthy (Black)



Shamkovich (White) to move

Position after Black's 13th move

Only one can play

I referred last week to the Montreal tournament and touched upon a rather delicate subject, the absence of Viktor Korchnoi. That he, the world's number two, should be excluded from a tournament intended to feature the world's top ten requires some explanation beyond arithmetical ineptitude.

Ever since Korchnoi defected from the Soviet Union in the summer of 1976, he has been 'blacklisted' by the Soviet Chess Federation. No Soviet player is allowed to compete in an event in which Korchnoi is playing and even players from other Eastern Bloc countries are under strong pressure to boycott any event with which the name Korchnoi is associated. Of course the Soviet Federation denies that any such boycott exists, but official denials do not alter the reality of the situation. To ask any Soviet grandmaster to play in an event with Korchnoi is like inviting Yasser Arafat to a bar mitzvah. The only exception is the World Championship itself, because here refusal to compete would allow Korchnoi to take the title by default. This blacklisting gives tournament organisers an unenviable choice: invite Korchnoi and lose the possibility of having such names as Karpov, Spassky, Tal, Polugaevsky, Balashov... (the list is endless) or accept the implicit blackmail of the situation and leave Korchnoi out in the cold. In the case of Montreal they would have lost the first three names on this list and possibly also Hort (Czechoslovakia) and Portisch (Hungary). Even before Montreal began there was the case of a tournament in Yugoslavia being forced to retract an invitation which Korchnoi had already accepted so that two Soviet grandmasters could play.

Why, you may ask, are the Soviet authorities so vindictive towards Korchnoi? The answer goes deeper than petty childishness (We don't like you. We aren't going to play with you). In recent years there has been a gradual efflux of chessplayers from the USSR through legal emigration, but this emigration can be easily controlled. Korchnoi's defection (illegal under Soviet law) and subsequent success, however, set a potentially dangerous precedent which if followed could easily milk the Soviet Union of much of their top chessplaying talent. The Soviet sanctions against Korchnoi can therefore be seen not so much as a simple act of spite, but more as a thinly veiled disincentive to any other Soviet grandmaster who might be thinking that the grass on the other side is, if not a little green, maybe

a little less red.

However far Soviet sanctions against Korchnoi may extend, I don't think they can stop people playing the French Defence. In the following game, however, Korchnoi's favourite opening comes horribly to grief. White: Shamkovich. Black: McCarthy. USA 1976. French Defence.

1. P-K4, P-K3; 2. P-Q4, P-Q4; One of Korchnoi's specialities. Black avoids the pin with B-QN5, but loses time. 3. N-Q2, P-QB4; 4. KN-B3, P-QR3; 5. KP x P, KP x P; 6. P x P, B x P; 7. N-N3, B-R2; 8. B-Q3, N-KB3; 9. O-O, O-O; 10. P-KR3, N-B3; 11. B-KN5. A very annoying pin for Black. 11.... O-Q3; 12. P-B4, P-Q5; Not 12.... P x P?? 13. B x P+. 13. P-B5!, B x BP? Overlooking the following trick. However unpleasant, he had to move the queen. DIAGRAM 14. B x N, P x B; 15. Q-B1, N-N5; If 15.... B moves, 16. Q-R6 wins. 16. Q x B. Resigns.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

WHETHER artificial systems are an intolerable nuisance, separating tournament players from rubber-bridge players, or a fascinating part of the game, is a debatable question. (Twenty years ago I campaigned for the prohibition of all cipher bids, apart from universally known conventions, such as Blackwood.) The following deal occurred in this year's Oxford v. Cambridge match. It was reported in the *Bridge Magazine* by Barry Rigal, a member of the winning Oxford team.

Dealer, West. Love all.
 ♠ 7 6 5
 ♥ J 10 8 7
 ♦ 4 3 2
 ♣ 8 4 2
 ♠ A Q 10
 ♥ 4
 ♦ A K Q 10 7
 ♣ A K 6 5
 N
 W
 E
 S
 ♠ 8 4 3 2
 ♥ K 3 2
 ♦ 8
 ♣ Q J 10 9 7
 ♠ K J 9
 ♥ A Q 9 6 5
 ♦ J 9 6 5
 ♣ 3

The Oxford East-West pair were playing the relay system of Granovetter and Rubin. This was the bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Lee	Ginsberg	Young	Douglas
—	1♣	No	1♦
1♥	No(1)	No	1♠(2)
No	1NT(3)	No	2♥(4)
No	2♠	No	2NT(5)
No	3♣	No	3♠(6)
No	4♠	No	4♥(7)
No	5♠(8)	No	No

(1) The pass, after the strong opening and negative response, is a relay bid, inviting partner to declare his suit.

(2) Further negative.

(3) This, and the next three bids by West, were all minima, pursuing the relay tactics.

(4) King plus Queen plus black suit.

(5) Suit is clubs.

(6) Second suit is spades. (The editor, Eric Milnes, added an ironic exclamation mark to celebrate the coincidence between bid and suit.)

(7) Hearts longer than diamonds, so the shape is 4-3-1-5.

(8) Abandoning the relay and stating the final contract.

You might think that most pairs would reach Six Clubs, if not so scientifically. But there you would be wrong. The Gantabs at the other table subbed in Three Clubs.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



WHEN Columbus discovered Jamaica, in 1494, he found it peopled by Arawak Indians, estimated to number about 60,000. The Arawaks did not survive the Spanish occupation and had already died out when Jamaica became a British possession in 1655. A stamp in the Jamaican pictorial series issued in 1919 featured an Arawak woman preparing cassava but it was not until last year that further philatelic recognition of the Arawaks was made in the shape of three stamps depicting some of their artefacts found about 200 years ago in the parish of Vere. A second series showing other Arawak artefacts has now been issued. They include a grindstone, a serving-dish and this cooking-pot, dated at about AD 300, on the 20-cents stamp. The new stamps have been designed by David Bowen and printed in Britain by The House of Queens.



EARLIER this year the American Post Office proposed to introduce new postage rates of 13 cents for private letters and 16 cents for business mail. The Postal Rates Commission recommended instead a uniform letter rate of 15 cents. Because 15-cents stamps are not yet available in sufficient quantity, the Post Office has had to release stamps printed several years ago for use in an emergency. Instead of a face value these stamps have only the letter A. They are now being sold at 15 cents each for use on internal mail. This is the second time in recent years that such an expedient has been necessary in the United States. The two Christmas stamps of 1975 were printed without a face value and sold at 10 cents each.

C. W. HILL



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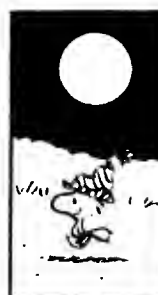
NS/CAS-2/79

PEANUTS

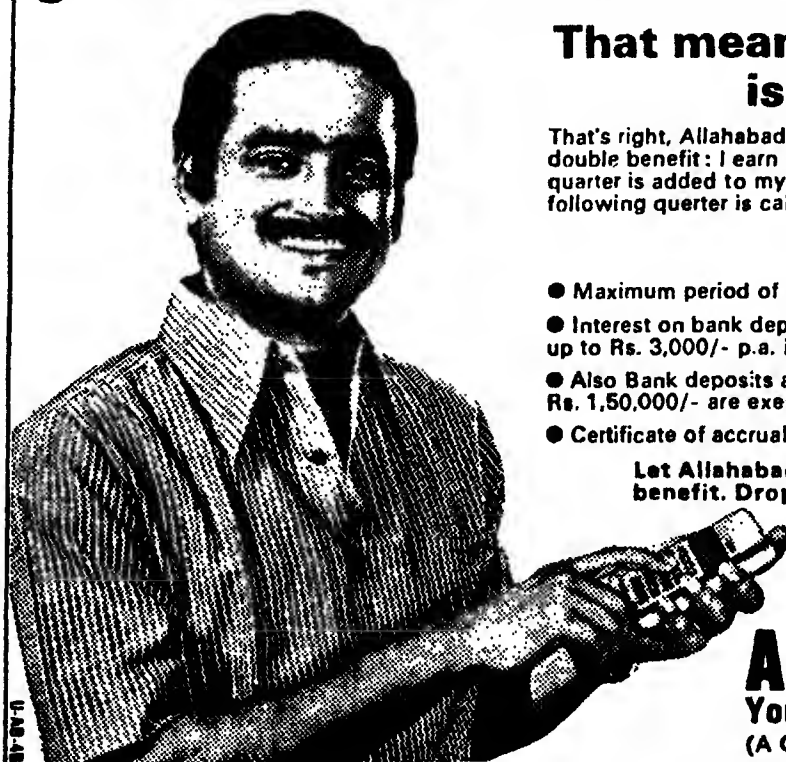
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RAIPUR : An Aghori sadhu has terrorised the district officials here. After being ordered to vacate a piece of nazul land which he had illegally occupied, the sadhu came to the Raipur office of the tehsildar of Ambikapur in Sarguja district and placed a human skull on his table. The sadhu challenged the collector, the sub-divisional officer, the tehsildar and the superintendent of police to dare to remove it. The terror-stricken tehsildar left his office which remained closed for three days — *The Times of India* (Usha Jayachandra Babu, Bihar)

HARPANAHALLI : Hagaribommanahalli police are investigating into a complaint against a hotel owner of Kathyanamaradi in Hagaribommanahalli under the Untouchability (Offence) Act. It is stated that Kadiabal village Panchayat member Kattappanavar Basappa went to the hotel belonging to Revanasiddaiah and requested him to serve him tea. The hotel proprietor, it is stated, told Mr. Basappa that he would be served tea only in a coconut shell kept for Harijans, and asked him to pick up the shell kept outside the hotel. Mr. Basappa refused to do so and asked him to serve tea in a

glass as the others in the hotel were being served but the hotel owner did not budge, it is stated. The Dy SP visited the spot — *Deccan Herald* (Shreekanth, Mysore)

THANJAVUR : A novel protest by a taluk office clerk has attracted public and also the higher authorities and solved his problem. It is said the clerk, G. Arumai Lazar, was sitting in his seat on Wednesday (February 6) evening wearing a saree over his usual dress and accompanied by his wife and three children in protest against non-disbursement of pay advance and delay in sending the last pay certificate. He was previously working as Revenue Inspector at Kandiyur and was transferred to Thanjavur taluk office last month. He joined duty on January 23. Before being relieved from Kandiyur, he applied for pay advance and this amount was not paid till February 6. Further, his January pay had not been given to him this month due to delay in sending the LPC from the previous station. This caused considerable inconvenience to him and he resorted to this protest. Immediately the Tahsildar made arrangements to disburse his pay advance of Rs 445 — *The Indian Express* (S. Balakrishnan, Trichy)

RAICHUR : A scientist here missed his lifetime opportunity of seeing the solar eclipse as he was wandering between the proverbial "two worlds" — of faith and science — and finally chose the former. Professor P. V. R. Sharma, head of the department of physics at I. V. D. college, near here, did not see the spectacle of the century because it coincided with his birth star day. Seeing the coincidence a bad omen, he also gave away a tiny gold image of the sun god to a purohit. However, the professor proved to be of great help to the scientists. All of whom had a word of praise for the hospitality they received from the Sharmas — *The Times of India* (Pradip Kaumar Datta, Calcutta.)

HE (Sanjay Gandhi) is a member of Parliament and his qualities will unfold hereafter — Union Minister for External Affairs, Narasimha Rao

VICTORY has many fathers, defeat has none — RSS chief Balasahab Deoras

IT IS a matter of great shame for the Hindu society that although it can accept a Muslim as President not once but twice, it is not willing to accept a Harijan as Prime Minister though Harijans are an integral part of Hindu society — Atal Behari Vajpayee

We cannot go to the Centre... begging on our knees — Krishna Pada Ghosh, West Bengal Labour Minister

YES, I have a very large circle of friends. Is there a law against having friends... I am not a broker for anybody — Kanti Desai's reaction to the Vaidialingam report

GOD alone is my witness and knows that I have never taken a bribe from anyone — Gayatri Devi, wife of Charan Singh

MOSCOW has no strings and neither have we. We consult each other as brother parties. We can reject their opinion. No one is the big brother — S. A. Dange

GROMYKO came, he saw and he did not conquer — headline in the *Organiser*

IT'S (American aid) not a permanent arrangement like marriage — General Zia ul-Haq of Pakistan quoted in *India Today*

NOBODY sent a clear signal to Hitler. War became inevitable. We are not going to let that happen — President Jimmy Carter

YOU cannot examine the policies of the ex-Shah without examining American foreign policy as well — Iranian President Bani Sadr

I WILL not let my officers sleep while the people of Delhi are awake because of danger and insecurity — Home Minister Zail Singh

I AM not sure at what age I became consciously concerned with my body — Khushwant Singh

BUNNIES are no longer multiplying like rabbits, and for the first time Playboy Clubs are having to hustle for bustle — *Time*

india abroad

ABU DHABI : Up to 10,000 Indian immigrants in the United Arab Emirates may finally have to leave the country in the wake of the new regulations promulgated by the Government here. Many Indians have already left before the deadline of February 21. While no authentic figure is available the number of those who have left would not exceed a few hundred. A vast majority of Indians who do not have valid papers continue to be here, some having a chance to set right their papers in the four-month grace period, granted by the ruler of the UAE which ends on June 21. The bulk of those who

do not have valid papers are the "sponsorship" cases — those who have left the employers who had sponsored them. The number of Indians among them could be anywhere from 30,000 to 40,000. The UAE Government ever short of skilled manpower has allowed nine categories of personnel mostly those who have technical skills to change their sponsorship. They constitute about 20 per cent of the "sponsorship cases". The issue of expatriate workers was discussed by senior officials from India, Mr. Romesh Bhandari, Secretary External Affairs Ministry, and Mr. K. D. Sharma — *The Statesman*

RAPID ACTION



THE quick rejoinder by the youth wing of the Congress (I) to the statement issued by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's Sar-sanghchalak, Balasaheb Deoras regarding the possible links between his organisation and the Congress (I) must have come as a pleasant relief to many. The Youth Congress (I) office was very prompt in issuing a rejoinder. A statement by the organisation was distributed to the Press in the forenoon of February 14, the day when the RSS supremo's statement in Ahmedabad was flashed by some newspapers. Sanjay Gandhi also reacted against the statement at Lucknow the same day. But what is significant is that the RSS had tried to befriend Sanjay Gandhi and his mother earlier as well, during the Emergency, when many smaller functionaries of the RSS had signed pledges supporting the five point programme and many of them had clandestinely joined the Youth Congress. After Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi started the anti-Communist tirade in December, 1976 a flood of telegrams had been received by them from prominent RSS leaders congratulating them for upholding the "national interests". It is not unlikely that Deoras' statement will really be followed by "close cooperation" between his boys and the Congress (I) — by RSS boys again joining the Youth Congress in large numbers and becoming Sanjay Gandhi hardliners.

HOW MANY MORE ?

WITH NINE state Assemblies dissolved, has the thirst for dissolutions been quenched? The PM has said that she is not contemplating any more dissolutions, but sources say Karnataka, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh are on the short list. The delay is due to the need for ratification of the Reservation Amendment. But why has the RSS-dominated administration in Delhi been allowed to continue? It is likely that the Congress (I) may bring a legislation in Parliament shortly providing for an Assembly for Delhi, if not full statehood. The life of the present metropolitan council and the municipal corporation may continue till then, when they will automatically be superseded and elections will have to be held to the nascent Assembly. In the meantime, with Jagmohan as the I.T. Governor and P. S. Bhinder as the police chief, the Union Territory is already in the hands of the Congress (I).

WHAT NOW ?



HAS the departure of Sripad Amrit Dange from the chairmanship of the CPI solved all the problems of that Party? Knowledgeable sources say that it is just the beginning. Dange controls the main mass front of the CPI, the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), and in the event of the trade union front saying good-bye to the CPI, the organisation which is heavily dependent on the AITUC at many centres, would suffer. Moreover, Dange-liners dominate important positions in the administrative set-up of the Party headquarters,

WINNING OVER KARMAL

THE FAILURE of the Indian and the Soviet Foreign Ministers to see eye-to-eye on the question of the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan made the Soviets speak out openly in some private gatherings. They are peeved not only by the refusal of India to condone their action in Kabul but also by the way in which the Indian Foreign Office has dealt with the crisis. The despatch of senior envoys to neighbouring countries was not viewed with enthusiasm by the Soviets. One of them said that he was amused that an Indian envoy was sent to Kabul to exchange views on the Soviet action with the Karmal regime. Moreover, what has irked Moscow more is the visit of the Foreign Secretary to Islamabad. "Couldn't he have waited till comrade Gromyko's visit?" a Soviet source lamented. "What did India gain by the visit to Islamabad?" he asked.

Ajoy Bhavan. It is not unlikely that the CPI leadership would find it difficult to cope with the problems created by the office staff in the event of a further show-down. The CPI, incidentally, is the only political Party which owns a multistoried building in the capital for its headquarters. Ajoy Bhavan, situated very near the capital's Press complex, is well guarded by a contingent of red-shirted Party volunteers (referred to as "Red Guards"), most of whom owe allegiance to Dange.

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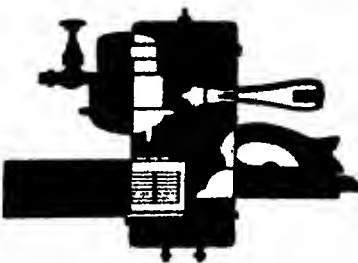
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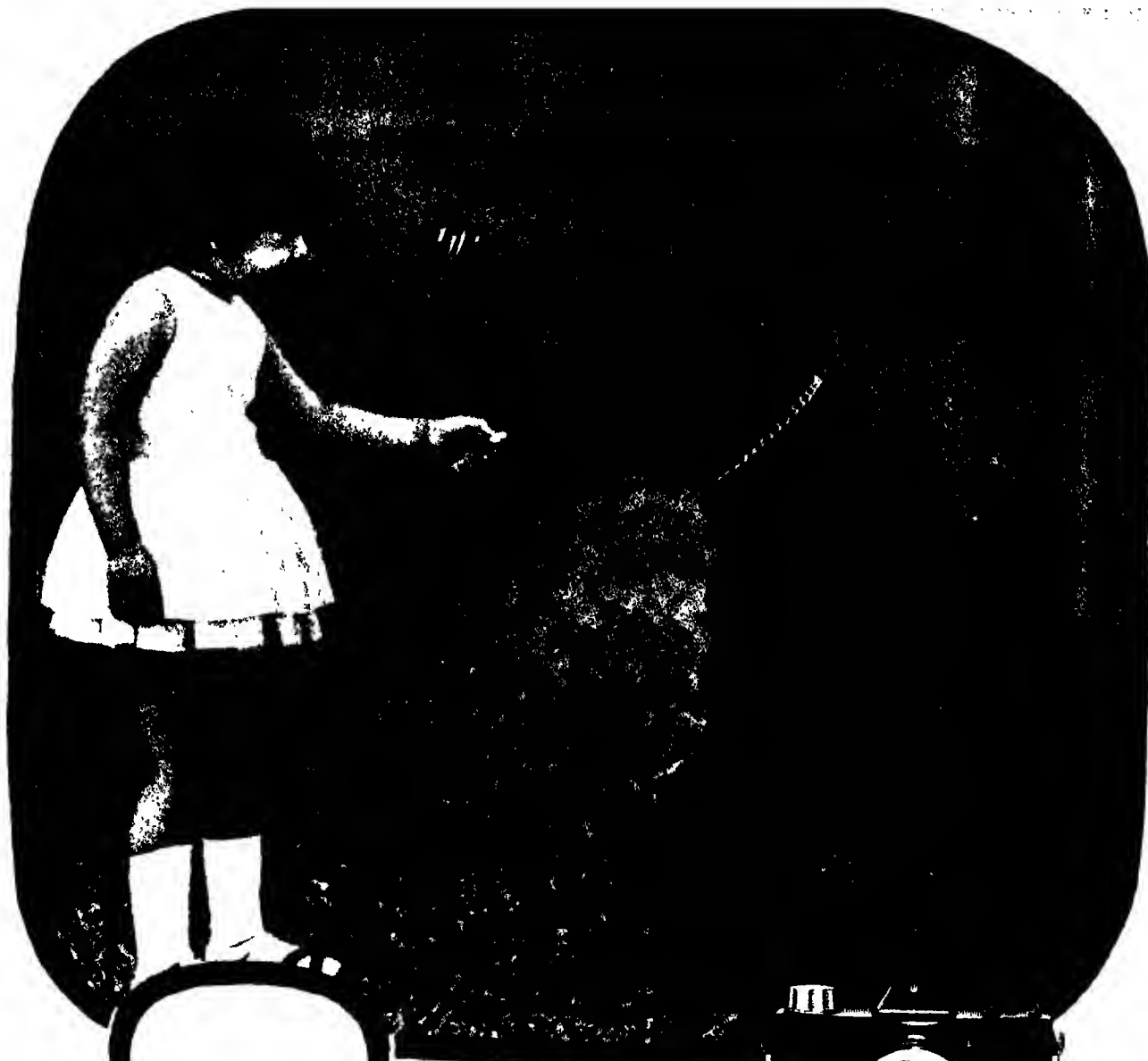


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C. Y. GOPINATH reports on
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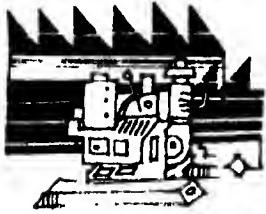
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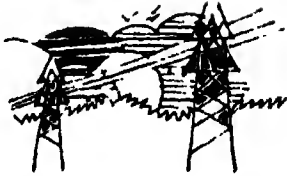
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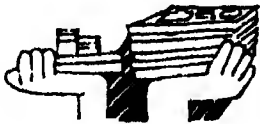
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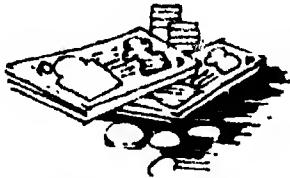
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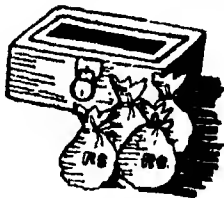
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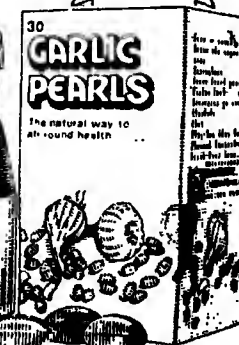
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Devils are exorcised at the Balaji Temple in Mehndipur. The residents of the temple town in Rajasthan do not find it unusual that they share their hometown with hordes of people who are possessed of demons and who come there seeking to be cured. The most important thing, about Mehndipur, according to the Mahanth of the Balaji Temple, is that people go there expecting miracles and they go with faith.

Susan Mingus, the manager of the seven-piece jazz band, the Mingus Dynasty, from the USA was recently in India playing for Indian audiences. She is also the widow of Charles Mingus, one of the foremost exponents of modern jazz. In an exclusive interview she talks about her husband, his music and his philosophy of life.

When young Amar Bose bought a hi-fi system, he found the sound reproduction was terribly distorted. The problem worried him for a long time, till he finally founded Bose Corporation, Massachusetts, in 1964 with some of his ex-students. Today, they manufacture speaker systems that have been hailed as the best in the world.

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Ominous portents

"THE Afghan War" by Vidya Prakash Dutt (February 10) presented a clear picture about the situation in Afghanistan. The author rightly justified his views about India's nuclear policy. Please publish more articles about international relations at least once a month.
K. P. Andavan, Coimbatore.

VIDYA PRAKASH DUTT will make the best External Affairs Minister of India, if only he is given the chance.
T. S. R. Krishnayya, Secunderabad.

THE article by V. P. Dutt was like going through a report in the Russian Communist Party newspaper, *Pravda*. From his point of view it is Washington who is guilty and responsible for the bloody and murky situation in which the Afghans find themselves. It was the Russians, who in the name of revolution overthrew the nationalist Daoud regime and after the April revolution got Nur Mohammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin assassinated. Later, the Soviets landed Babrak Karmal and thousands of its imperialistic forces on the Afghan soil. Who gave birth to rebels, America or Russia? The clash between the two giants over the situation in Afghanistan is most dangerous and fatal to the Third World; it is in the best interests of the Third World to keep aloof, and pursue all possible efforts to defuse the crisis. Mrs Gandhi has stated that we are neither pro-American nor pro-Russian; we are pro-Indians. But according to V. P. Dutt India should join hands with the Kremlin.
Mohammad Tanvir Parvez, Lucknow.

APROPOS the cover story by V. P. Dutt, there is some evidence that Russia is beginning to realise that it

reacted too hastily in the Afghan affair. Moscow still has the opportunity to recover from the Afghan adventure without loss of face.
Nancy Koul, Srinagar.

CONGRATULATIONS for the two superb articles—"The Afghan War" and "Moscow Olympics and Western hypocrisy" by M. J. Akbar. While most of our stiff-necked journalists have a tendency to condemn the Soviet Union through their papers, SUNDAY has taken pains to analyse the whole situation correctly and courageously.
E. P. Menon, Bangalore.

THE Soviet action to save a backward country like Afghanistan from bloodshed need not be condemned. If the Russians would not have done this, the Americans would surely have captured the country later.
M. S. Prasad, Nellore.

V. P. DUTT's article hardly moved me. I wonder by which international law the Russian military intervention in Afghanistan can be justified. To my great surprise, the author has essayed to justify the Russian move by arguing that the condition in Afghanistan had been posing a great threat to the Soviet Union's territorial unity. Is this justification acceptable?
Muazzam Athar, Dhanbad.

THE cover story offers readers superb and worthwhile reading. It is quite understandable that the Russians sent troops to Afghanistan in consideration of their vital security interests which cannot be justified. Politics, as it is practised today, is based on self-interest and the word 'morality' is used conveniently to suit one's own game.
Prabodh Kumar Bhattacharya, Berhampur.

Brilliant expose

UDAYAN SHARMA's report, "What happened to N. K. Singh" (February 10) brought out the whole story. The drama of N. K. Singh's arrest is no simple matter and every conscious citizen should take note. The arrest is perhaps a sign that Mrs Gandhi's Government may turn vindictive. This is only the beginning, and the black days of the Emergency may come back again in some other form.
R. Bhaskaran, Thiruchirappalli.

THE tragic episode of the arrest will no doubt demoralise the entire bureaucracy as Udayan Sharma pointed out.
V. A. Poonkodi Selvan, Thiruvaiyaru.

THANKS to Udayan Sharma for the report. The situation created by

M. J. AKBAR's article on the Moscow Olympics was timely and superb. To strike a personal note, it made me proud of SUNDAY. For a long time, we mediaguzzlers have felt the lack of an all-India English magazine from Calcutta and the void has been amply filled. There is a particular pleasure, perverse though it may seem, to attack the historical and continuing repositories of Imperialism with the best use of the language they have fathered.

Viva SUNDAY, keep it going.
T. R. Ramalingam, Calcutta.

PETER NIESEWAND's article, "The Red Army: Preparing for spring" was thought-provoking. Russia is making all possible preparations to invade the frontiers of Pakistan by next spring. Now it is absolutely clear that the ultimate intention of the Russians is to touch the warm waters of the Arabian Sea from where they will be able to control the Indian Ocean and the entire Gulf region. A Soviet tactic that is clear to us is that before invading any country they try to keep friendly relations with the country concerned and insist on signing a war treaty. A similar treaty exists with our country which might be to our misfortune.
Samir Roy, Calcutta.

CONGRATULATIONS to M. J. Akbar for his explicit analysis of the controversial issue of the Moscow Olympics. We can condemn the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in ways other than boycotting the Games. Otherwise, it will simply mean our surrender to Western hypocrisy. We know well that Western democratic countries practise racism in Rhodesia.
Dhuryati Prasad Paul, Silchar.

Mrs Gandhi is a sort of undeclared Emergency. Witness the dissolving of the nine state Assemblies, arrest of N. K. Singh and transfer of three senior CBI officers. She was voted to power not for taking revenge but for correcting the Emergency excesses.
Priyith Sinha, Hyderabad.

KUDOS for the informative article on the arrest. The arrest is a move of political vendetta and vindictiveness. Mrs Gandhi's Government is seeking to impose a psychological atmosphere of the Emergency in the country instead of solving the burning problems like rise in prices, drought, unemployment, the Harijan problem, etc. The arrest and the appointments of some senior police officers in Delhi are symptomatic of the events to come.
Shreekanth, Mysore.

Punish the guilty

"BRUTALITY at Narainpur" by Santosh Bhartiya (February 10) clearly shows the lawlessness of the guardians of the law who indulged in atrocities like arson, looting and rape. It cannot be imagined that such things happen in a civilised country. Everyone feels that the culprits must be awarded proper punishment for the crimes they committed.

B. N. Bose, Jamshedpur.

I AGREE with you that Narainpur is a symbol of national shame and all the credit goes to the Indian politicians, their negative ethics, inadequacies, gimmicks and failures for 33 years of Independence.

J. J. W. Mahaprabhu, Bangalore.

THE manner in which our police are behaving after 33 years of Independence is a matter of great concern. There is something wrong with the training pattern of the police force. To counter such tendencies, the people should wake up and fight against the harassment meted out to them.

Anil Kumar Ojha, Motihari.

I WOULD not have known about the Narainpur incident if you had not reported it. I shudder to think that in this advanced age of science when man is trying to explore the secrets of the planets his brethren are playing a barbaric game. Can the izzat of poor villagers be restored simply by transferring the police officials?

S. A. Kamal Hashmi, Aurangabad.

IF the incident is true, then Indian policemen should bow their heads in shame. No enquiry commissions and suspensions would improve the situation. The guilty should be dismissed and sent to jail.

R. Singh, Monghyr.

A hex on sex

STOP publishing ribaldry like the one by Dr Mala Shelley, "Sex hooks: A feminist viewpoint" (February 10) and allow us to remain in the dark and be happy with our own cultural concepts and ideas of doing things. It is nauseating to read of incest indulged in by mother and sons, brothers and sisters whatever flavour the author might have tried to add with spicy translations from Sanskrit epics to disguise her bad taste and prove her erudition.

A. K. Sengupta, 24-Parganas.

DR MALA SHELLEY in her essay laments that "...the so-called communication in sex... can really not happen without love, though making love is a euphemism for that four letter word which the editor would not allow me to write". But then the four letter word has been published in the same issue of SUNDAY on page 22.

C. T. Puri Arasu, Tuticorin.

Unsung Ulsterman

"CRICKET's modern patrons" (February 10) attracted my attention. K. M. Rangnekar states that "Bombay cricket was built on the Times of India Shield and that this tournament was unique not only in India but in the world." Not many of your readers will know that this tournament was started by an unassuming Ulsterman, N. J. Hamilton, who came to the Times in 1927. Himself an all-rounder, he was amazed at the popularity of cricket when he saw cricketers practising on the field outside his office. Realising how unorganised the game was he set out to do something about it.

With the help of a Mr Lall from the now defunct firm of The Havers Trading Co., who acted as the first Honorary Secretary, they formed the Times of India cricket tournament. N. J., as he was commonly called, was a good sportsman and holds what I think is the record for scoring the most number of goals on the Cooperage, when playing for Bombay Gymkhana—five goals. As proprietor of the *Sunday Standard* and the *Morning Standard*, now renamed the *Indian Express*, he donated the Sunday Standard Challenge Shield and Cup which now constitutes the two main competitions played every year at Diwali.

S. Terrey, Mysore.

Are Adivasis expendable?

IT is shocking to note that the killing of an adivasi youth in a police firing does not constitute a news item in West Bengal even while describing the police firing. The Purulia incident of February 5, 1980 was reported in all the national dailies from West Bengal and was even broadcast over AIR. But nowhere was it mentioned that a tribal youth was killed in police firing in that incident though the news bulletin never forgot to describe the "injury" to the police and the incident as a "raid on the thana". The issue was also not correctly presented, if not deliberately distorted. It appears, no one cares for the cause of the poor people. Who bothers if they live or die!

I went to Purulia on February 7 and the next day the villages connected with the incident. I found the body of the tribal youth decomposing in the post-mortem room in the Purulia district hospital and the tribal people waiting there in vain to take delivery of the body. It took me three hours to take permission from the district administration to hand over the body to the relatives of the deceased. I tried to contact the Governor who was fortunately there, and in the Circuit House I found him busy discussing the development of sports in Purulia. But I could not meet him as I was told that he went to sleep after the meeting on the advice of the doctor.

Perhaps this is the first time an adivasi youth was killed in a police firing in West Bengal. But there was absolute unconcern bordering on contempt and hostility had surfaced everywhere. Nobody from the district administration went to the village, nor did anybody from Writers' Building come to the district headquarters. Even the Minister for Tribal Welfare, or his Department was not bothered over the incident, though everybody knows that the tribals were not that vocal enough to present their version of the incident.

The opposition Parties in West Bengal who shout on every small opportunity to defame the Left Front Government were also nowhere in sight. It appears that none in West Bengal is concerned over the killing of an adivasi youth.

The name of the adivasi youth is Shri Raghav Murmu, of village Inanpur, Police Station Netaria, District Purulia. The issue was removal of liquor shops from the village area in general and the adivasi area in particular. It is alleged by the district administration that the tribal youth had destroyed one licensed liquor shop. I wonder, how such a moral issue should provoke police firing. The adivasis did not raid the police station. They assembled there demanding the release of their boys arrested in that connection and the high percentage of women and children showed that they had no aggressive intention. The thing continued for ten hours but no senior official from Purulia which was only one hour's journey could turn up to talk with the adivasis and it was left to the local police to settle the matter there with guns. Once Rabindranath Tagore wrote how cannons were used to force opium on China, now in his own land the gun is being used to force liquor trade in the name of law and order.

I demand an all Party probe into the police firing at Netaria which was absolutely unjustified and a blot on the glorious democratic traditions of West Bengal. If it is proved that there was suppression of news of death of the tribal youth by a fake Press release, punishment should be meted out to the officers concerned. Compensation should be paid to the family of the deceased and all liquor shops removed from the area. This incident, if ignored, may well become a spark which will kindle a prairie fire in the area.

A. K. Roy, Member of Parliament, Dhanbad.

Do our ads tell lies?

SEEN: A Coca Cola can doing the rounds in the canteen of St Xavier's College, the most "with-it" place in Bombay. Ecstatic students clamour for a drop, just a drop of that luscious drink that cruel authorities had banished from the land. The empty can is auctioned off to an ardent Coke fan so that he can preserve it on his mantelpiece. ... and heard: Coca Cola bottles appeared mysteriously at Bombay's IT Mood-Indigo and sold at Rs. 3.50 per bottle. They were sold out in fifteen minutes.

Blind Tests the world over have proved in such cases that when fans clamour for a particular brand, two out of three are duped when ersatz imitations are packag-

By **ASHISH RAJADHYAKSHA**

ed in original containers; they notice no difference. In effect, therefore, the large majority of Coke aficionados on the cocktail circuits that lament things are just not what they used to be in the days of rum'n coke, will not be able to tell the difference if given a Thums Up in a Coke bottle. Quite simply, what one drinks when



Share the world. Make every moment a story. This is the fabric with a flair. The Indian Elegantly Modern.

MANHAR FABRICS

THE MANEKAL  HARILAL MILLS LIMITED AHMEDABAD (INDIA)



One of our Executive Models

Claret, I have no doubts are brand leaders in the country offering more than 25 variants in 1 litre and 2 litre sizes.

Make from the finest French brandy selected in perfect form by experienced craftsmen that only a blend can give, this quality and smoothness of Claret have a word.

P. S. Don't forget to keep your Claret in a cool place.

Claret

the complete healthy drink

Orlando, Md.
Radio Station: WJLA-TV
Tel. 224-1111

one buys smuggled Coca Cola at a small fortune is not the beverage that quenches thirst, but the image that surrounds the 'Real Thing!' — Things Go Better with Coca Cola, says the hard sell, and people believe that. The Indian replacements for Coke use the same line. The successful Indian soft drink, Thums Up, is not marketed for a hot day, but with the imagery of the beaches, pretty girls and the return of happy days. Happiness is synonymous with a soft drink.

Other products too. A paint isn't supposed to perform only so pedestrian an act as beautifying your home; it also offers you an elevation on the social scale. And sexual prowess: Avanti Cigarillos give you that extra pep you need before you get into bed with her. It's got length and strength, as a blurb would convince you. It's up to you to fall for the trap or to evade it with a knowing smile on your face.

The lie of advertising is, generally, never so easily spotted. It is always woven craftily into the very persuasive copy and a highly tempting promise of a big change indirectly indicated. Advertising has, and continues to, defend itself on the ground of providing information to the consumer. In today's adworld this is a simplicism that almost borders on deliberate distortion of fact. A recent OBM survey on whether people think that advertising should be there or not brought the comforting response that the vast majority out there did think that it helped them to keep in touch, and guided their purchase. Adworld, thus having displayed its touching faith in the power of pub-

lic opinion, returned presumably comforted to its airconditioned cocoons to churn out its fantasies, indeed do its very best to eliminate the element of choice that is the essence of the democracy on which it appears to want to base its credo.

It is in fact a clever sense of double standards that one needs to pinpoint before one gets to the question of the lie of advertising. 'Look, Touch, and feel Carnaby; Comfort and style as only a great fabric can give': this is all that the OBM-Carnaby ad says. But the hint is a lot more articulate: this classy girl sitting in a swank car, on the porch of an expensive looking house, and you, with your Carnaby suit, you are sitting on the bonnet and accepting a natty cigarette. Interpreted in words, this says clear and loud: 'All this will be yours, for the price of a Carnaby suit'. Naturally it's a lie, but try proving it to the agency.

Frank Simoes, of Simoes Advertising, which has designed the Raymonds campaign (fashions of '79, and What the Well-dressed Man is Wearing), believes completely that his campaign should be looked at as nothing more than product information, or 'Consumer Service Orientation' as the jargon would have it. Says Simoes, "If I keep drumming into your head that if you use Raymonds' suitings you will be more successful with girls, what is wrong with that? Do you know the power of persuasion — the complex results of an almost hypnotic conviction that you will improve? Advertising — at least better advertising — often fulfils many of the common man's aspirations; it

Mod Thread
bring you a thread of world standards through
TECHNOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGH of the century.

New Special Mod Thread
leather goods
guarantees their footwear
longer life

Mod Thread

COPENHAGEN

SAS
SCANDINAVIAN AIRLINES

gives him a projected personality, which he can satisfy".

Much of Simoes' ideology is more relevant to the capitalist environment than the more economically backward one that is the Indian. With the emergence of the Affluent Society the problem was no longer to satisfy the basic needs, which had been met; it was the 'higher' needs which wanted satisfaction, needs in fact that had to be first stimulated before the product could be sold. With the rise in purchasing power manufacturers began competing with each other harder, and brand differences began getting finer and finer. The promises that the advertisements started to make became ever more bizarre: do this and you will get a job, do what and you'll be the most popular man in

town. As Wilson Bryan Key, a major critic of American advertising, said, "The conscious content of the ad might say 'Buy Clink' which the viewer rejects at the conscious level. The subliminal message might read 'Buy virility with Clink'. What North American male could resist the promise of virility?"

One can take Frank Simoes' viewpoint further and state that it is advertising that often articulates the latent needs of the consumer. And this is where the first major lie in Indian advertising emerges. Indian advertising tends to propagate an entirely lopsided system that only increases an existing social imbalance. Perhaps, in this, it reflects the nature of the Indian economy, with its dubious "mix". A precise instance where this is

particularly evident is the health-food industry, although the same syndrome exists in varying degrees in a great deal of Indian advertising.

From Mealmaker, which promises to bridge the 'vital protein gap' to tonics like Incremin, ethical over-the-counter products are advertised with only the upper and upper-middle classes in mind. This is not totally the agency's fault. After all, the price of a product helps determine its market. But whatever the reasons, the system is absurd. Says Dr B. C. Mehta, a leading Bombay haematologist and honorary physician at the KEM Hospital, "Most health products are traditionally marketed through medical prescriptions. But items like Vimgran, which has Vitamins A & D, and Incremin, as well as Tonos 7 and Rakta Doshantak, are now marketed as direct OTC items, because they have realised that it is more profitable to advertise and convince potential customers that they need them rather than go through doctors, who will naturally be more

sceptical (about the claims of these tonics). With the result that they are bought by the very people that don't need them, and then they are consumed indiscriminately. The dosage of one tablet a day that Vimgran advocates is an overdose for anyone who is normal, and has a steady diet. It can even be harmful".

Dr Arvind Bakshi, Assistant Director at the Haffkine Institute, says, "The people who need these health products cannot afford them, and the people who do not need them consume them in huge quantities. It becomes fashionable to use these products. I think that advertising of some of the health products is totally unethical, and must be banned. The fault lies with the entire attitude of the manufacturers, and it is the advertising of the products that does all the damage".

A recent study by England's 'Social Audit' has criticised the form of advertising by Horlicks and Bournvita, according to *New Delhi* magazine. Both the products feature endorsements by doctors in their

advertisements which contravenes ethics and both the products are not as good as they are made out to be by the public claims. The report says that their "calorific value and protein content can be compared to that of any good cereal or pulse — and there is certainly nothing unique about them as nutrients, as some of the claims may suggest". In 1975 the government of India objected to Horlicks' claim that it was "twice as good as milk" and had it removed. It is the essence of the manner in which advertising is made to give a personality to the product, and sold to the very people that have no need for it. Much of the advertising is alarmist in that it persuades healthy people that they do suffer from symptoms, and they need treatment where in fact none is required.

The lie becomes a more dangerous one when in some cases qualities are added to the product which in fact it doesn't have. Bournvita, for instance is marketed in England and America as a nightcap, to induce sleep. In India, where presumably Market Research must have shown that there was a slot for an energy drink, Bournvita undertook a transformation in its qualities, and advertising has since done the rest. Another Cadbury product, milk chocolate, withdrew its "more than a drink, a food, campaign" in England, because objections about its nutritional abilities were made in India, it is still used.

Sanghamitra Khanna, who is the 'Probe Qualitative Research' expert at the Indian Market Research Bureau, agrees that it could well be so, that manufacturers often do simply claim the qualities that Market Research says the product should, rather than does, have. "We normally do the job of trying to see if a slot exists in the market. Say, if a new toothpaste is to be marketed, we will check on the colour, the qualities of existing toothpastes, and we will explore what new qualities are marketable". She concedes that they seldom check with the manufacturer as to whether he finally incorporates the qualities into his product, or simply advertises their presumed existence in the product. "If he is a regular client, we do know what he does, but if he has only come to us once we don't bother".

Glaxose-D is another product that achieves its lie in the advertising. The essence of glucose-D is that it can be absorbed directly without need for predigestion. "But it needs to be prescribed only in such cases as require such energy administered in this form. Widely advertised, in most cases it does practically no good to the people who buy it, because they are healthy enough in the first place," says Dr Bakshi.

A more insidious manifestation of this tendency towards social imbalance is when the advertisements try and sell 'sophistication' and 'good taste'. Much of the 'sophistication' is a direct copy of Western advertising, but a direct result has been





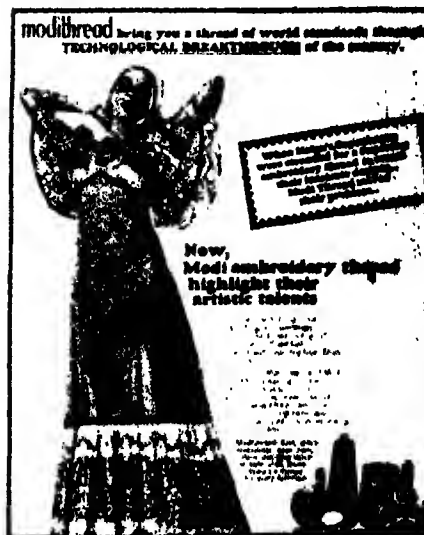
—case-studies prove it—a sense of alienation that often affects the middle-classes, whose mundane lives are only made more so by the knowledge that "glamour and happiness" is palpably out of their reach. The entire genre of textile advertising in India is based on the concept of envy, and it is of a highly reactionary nature. 'What are you in the mood for?...Nothing expresses you like our fabrics' (Te-i-Tex). 'A wild new wind is blowing your way' (Piramal). 'Surprise your girl every day of the week' is another Piramal ad; it shows the man in seven poses, weaving a suit, a casual outfit, playing tennis, eating out, etc. It is quite possible that the actual purchasers of Piramal do lead this lifestyle, although one would doubt it. But the effect is greater on those who cannot afford this lifestyle, and may be hard pressed to even purchase one Piramal suit.

A recent study has proved that one of the reasons why the Hindi cinema has been so effective in moulding working-class tastes is that they needed a more accessible fashion-culture as alternative to the elite exclusiveness of the culture that advertising constantly emphasises to them but at the same time makes known to them that it is not for either their purses or their 'tastes'.

WHILE on the question of textile advertising, we can turn to an opinion that has been expressed in the *Economic and Political Weekly*, which alleges that the marketing and sales promotion tactics of the branded products of the organised industry have resulted in often diverting the priorities of the Indian planned economy. "The role of Indian marketing is necessarily narrowed down to the more affluent in the cities...and this concentration is sharply reflected in the rapid growth of the supreme and synthetic textile industry together with the sluggishness in ordinary—especially coarse cotton textiles industry. Indeed the employment and hence the spread

of purchasing power in the textile industry has declined with the use of sophisticated technology associated with the new pattern of textile production". Says a left-wing economist, and editor of an economic journal, "I would put the blame for the failure of the cheap-cloth scheme on the organised private sector textile industry. This industry has been so assiduous in propagating the cause of the sophisticated textiles for the upper classes in its advertising, that the advertising has proved a catalyst for yet more production of the same type of product". The damage therefore is often greater than merely as a hurt to a middle-class ego.

K. Kurien, the Chief Executive of Radeus Advertising, and an articulate defender of the free economy, believes that advertising needs to be looked at only as a small symptom of the total marketing. "It is never the producers who have created economic imbalances, it is always the bureaucrats that have tended to stunt growth. They put up the MRTPT to enquire on whether advertising tends to create monopolies. I



tell you, the MRTPT is stupid. Advertising as such cannot do very much more than, in a very limited sense, provide information to the public about a certain product. The people aren't fools to buy what they don't want to buy. Nothing can convince a man who basically doesn't want to buy, that he should buy something. Advertising never creates needs, it merely articulates existing latent needs, and it reflects a very wide variety of products, from those that sell as fashion on the one hand to those that have solely utility causes, on the other." Mr Kurien, who has written an essay for the *Economic and Political Weekly* on 'Advertising in a planned economy' tends to state beliefs that are uniformly held by manufacturers and advertising people. He however made a point when he said that the Raymond's campaign was based on false premises when it tried to convince common people that 'fashion' as it is understood in the west, exists at all in India: "People in

India cannot be taken in by things like fashion, or anything that is basically alien to their own lives". But, if nothing else, the very success of the Raymond's campaign, which has maintained the same approach for several years now, should make Mr Kurien ponder about the effect of such advertising.

The very nature of some of the advertising that one gets in India tends to reduce its credibility. "Modithread bring you a thread of world standards through a *Technological Breakthrough* of the century" is the heading of one advertisement. Going through the copy, all that one discovers is that the thread now guarantees footwear longer life. While possibly a fine achievement, although one would be tempted to ask how much longer the life, surely not a technological breakthrough of the century?

Modifloor, another Modi enterprise, claims to have carpets designed in 'the most modern technology, advanced research, development and quality control'. Apart from a natural question of whether this is the most advanced in the country or the world, such a claim is typical in much of Indian advertising—phrases like the most modern, the most advanced, are commonly used with no further data to back them up. On an even simpler level, the Godrej refrigerator had an 'engineer' telling the reader that he was a man who knew all there was to know about refrigerators, and he chose Godrej, why don't you? He did not, of course, bore the reader with any details of why he thought that Godrej was the best; the engineer did not even bother to give his name. Product endorsing by well-known personalities raises its own questions—does Hema Malini really use Lux? Does Parveen Babi really wear Bombay Dyeing saris?—but this sort of advertisement is even a step further in the lie. There is not even one valid claim; the advertisement was merely selling the unfounded impression that engineers thought that the Godrej refrigerator was the best.

Advertising today is a major industry. The total business placed through the accredited agencies has topped Rs 130 crores in the last year. One, however, gets the impression, enhanced by meetings with advertisers, agency personnel, and that vast galaxy of talent that it sports, that the adworld today is an extremely complacent little community. By definition it has worked on the American and west European system, and now its entire thought-process is conditioned by the west. If the annual awards for excellence in advertising instituted by CAG are an indication of what is believed to be good advertising, one can see in what manner it has been hidebound by the need to be clever, by that very glossy culture that in its own little social whirl, is totally out of touch with the people. (Is that why one agency's efforts to sell a political Party flopped?)

Sex and Indian advertising

It's coming down ... " warns the advertisement, as a cartoon character slowly and tantalisingly pulls the zip down the back of the woman. A small hint of greater things to come is received from a line "Watch this space tomorrow". You keep it in mind. The next day: "Oooh la la! It's really coming down..." as another six inches of bare flesh comes into view. By the third day you realise with growing excitement that the dress appears to be really on its way down: "Mama Mia! It's almost down!" Watch This Space Tomorrow. You already see enough to realise that no bra or underclothing of any sort is going to hamper the view. By the fourth day you can't wait to see what's happened. You skip the front page headlines; turn to page 11. 'It's Down!' They have closed in on the girls from the back, the nether regions aren't visible, but well, there's a fair view of the



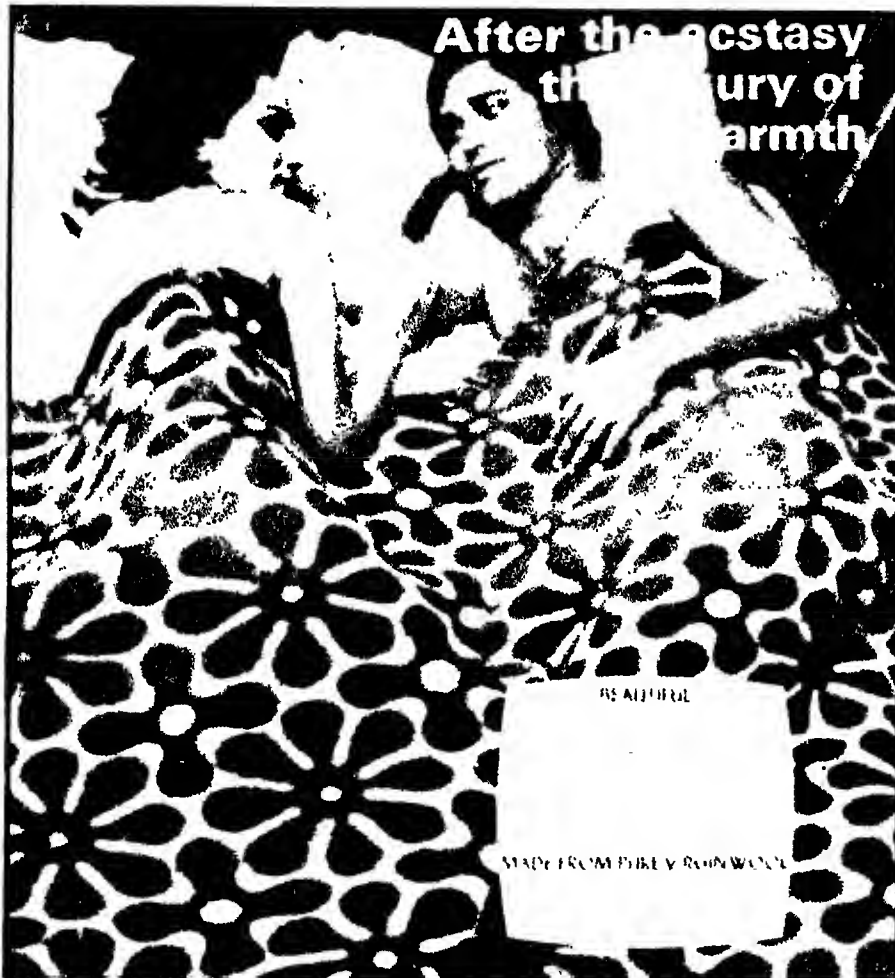
breast. By the way, the purpose of the advertisement? The price of one brand of Regent cigarettes has come down.

The advertisement is a precise instance of how advertising really uses the language of sex to push its message. Advertising akin to seduction: the mesmeric effect of a



striptease, or a slow seduction that delays the sexual gratification to a point where it represents the culmination of all your bodily wants—it is an effect very similar to this that advertising of a certain kind has on its viewer. The final result of a successful campaign is to psyche you into the conviction that all your earthly requirements are centered around that one precise act of purchasing the advertised product: that is the orgasm!

Advertising has often been called seduction. Sometimes it is the product, like the Regent cigarettes, that plays the role of seducer. Sometimes, only the copy is titillating if obscure. The Venus water heater has a copy that says "She's so warm ... She'll shower you with warmth... She's no trouble at all... She's waiting for you... She's—Venus." The



copy later describes the product as 'Venus the Water Nymph.'

There are other instances where the product is sold as an aphrodisiac. 'Sir silk delivers the 100% male'—and while the advertisement focuses on the male torso, the copy goes on to say, "Get into Sir silk. To discover the man you are. To keep you coolheaded when you indulge in hotheaded pursuits. A Step Cosmetics advertisement is even more blatant. 'Women's Ammunition' goes the heading, showing a woman wearing a gunbelt and *fondling*—no other word for it—a rifle. The copy adds, "You're sure to surrender to the tempting range of enamel (etc)." and next to it is the picture



of an open lipstick. Now it is a recognised fact that guns and rifles have been interpreted as phallic symbols.

Marshall McLuhan once said that the conscious significance of an advertisement is like the juicy piece of meat carried by the burglar to distract the watchdog of the mind so that the advertisement could then set about to do its real work. There are seldom conscious reasons why people prefer certain products to others. A market research survey which asked people consciously why they prefer certain cosmetics or creams has proved that they are unable to consciously justify their preferences, and in fact their reasons are in many cases at direct variance with what their subconscious reasons really are. Sanghamitra Khanna of IMRB says, "We never really depend on what the subject consciously tells us. His emphasis, certain variations in his speech etc often enables us to see through his conscious urges and get to the real reasons behind them."

Advertising often takes on the role of suggestion: a prime instance

is when it suggests that the product is linked with fucking, and there is a possibility that the act will take place soon after the purchase of the product. A very obvious advertisement that indulges in this is a recent one of Csango Briefcases. On the left is the legend, "One of our executive models" and on the right is a bikini-clad model soliciting male company. The effect is that of a package deal.

This advertisement is unusual, only because it is more direct than its more sophisticated counterparts. "Have a warm affair this winter" says the OCM-Ferrari tweed advertisement, with the woman hanging on the shoulder of the man dressed in all-wool suiting. Senorita lingerie has a hand-in-hand couple, and the large caption saying coquettishly, "Sir nightwear and Senorita lingerie turns the mood for all-out romance". You are all but told that soon after, this couple is going to get into bed and make love.

Look at OCM blankets: "After the ecstasy the luxury of warmth". The couple is sleeping under a blanket, and smaller copy says "Made from pure virgin wool". The word "virgin" is too conscious in its usage to be as innocent as it appears—for a person who hurriedly flips over the pages, sex is associated with the product, and it is an association that offers momentary stimulation, and resurges only when the buyer wants to buy a blanket.

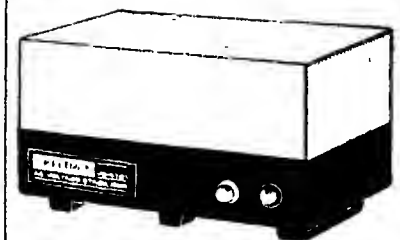
Manushi, the women's magazine, had a recent piece on how women are used in advertising. Britannia's two biscuit advertisements for "Delite" and "Snax", they point out, are some of the more sexually overt advertisements to be seen in recent years. Many people have noticed the use of the word "unpeel" when it should have been simply "peel", but never recognised any reason for it. If you look at the advertisement, you will see a background of orange, with a long strip peeled off vertically, and a woman behind, eating a Delite biscuit. Peeling is an act of completion, unpeel has the connotations of undoing, of dispossession. And when you dispossess something to get a luscious woman, it doesn't take much to get the analogy. Look at the "Snax" advertisement. "Exciting biting" goes the caption, as a woman is seen very obviously enjoying every nibble, and she is nibbling in a tantalising, almost provocative manner. What is exciting biting? Are you sure it talks of the biscuit?

One final advertisement that simply must be mentioned: Metropolitan's "All-Male belts". They show a woman, who is so far as we can see nude, with belts coiled around her. The effect of snakes is unmistakable, and the maleness of the copy evident. "For you to pick and choose... all three and many more" etc. The woman submissively accepting the idea of snakes coiled around her is almost a recreation of Reage's *Story of O* or Sade's *120 Days of Sodom*.

A. R.

BUY LATER PAY NOW

...Dearly



Your fridge, Air Conditioner and TV need the Keltron Voltage Stabiliser protection right now. Postpone your purchase even for a day and you might end up paying a heavy bill for repairing a burnt-out equipment.

KELTRON VOLTAGE STABILISER

Available in 6 capacities and 8 models

KELTRON
know-how to serve the people.

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Trivandrum 695 001 Telephone 60737

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Bombay Telephone. 893457, 893458

New Delhi Telephone 662193, 662194

Calcutta Telephone 24 5654

Madras Telephone 442310

Bangalore Telephone 29166

Trivandrum Telephone 65793

Ahmedabad Telephone 445967

Hyderabad Telephone 63786

FDS 623C

SUNDAY SPECIAL

The new Bose Model 501. It shapes the sound to fit your living room and your music.

The new Bose Model 501 Direct/Reflecting speaker captures the realism of live music by using room wall reflections to recreate the balance of reflected and direct sound you hear at a live performance.

At the same time, the ex-

clusive Bose Direct Energy Control lets you adjust the radiation pattern of the outward-firing tweeter for the size and shape of your room, and for your music. Designed for the sweep of a symphony or tighter, for the intimacy of a vocal solo.

Two extended-range 3-inch tweeters deliver crisp, clean highs, while the high-performance 10-inch woofer produces very deep, powerful bass with practically no distortion. And an innovative Dual Frequency Crossover network lets tweeters and woofer play simultaneously over more than an octave, for smooth open midrange.

Hear the new Model 501 the speaker that shapes the sound to fit the way you listen to music, at Bose dealers now.



The Direct Energy Control lets you adjust the radiation pattern of the outward-firing tweeter.



The Model 501 operates at 100 watts, 16 ohms, and 20 Hz to 20 kHz.



The detailed description of the Model 501 and the technology behind it is found in the Bose Corporation Dept. 1000, Framingham, Mass. 01901. You will receive a copy of the Bose Corporation Dept. 1000, Framingham, Mass. 01901. You will receive a copy of the Bose Corporation Dept. 1000, Framingham, Mass. 01901. You will receive a copy of the Bose Corporation Dept. 1000, Framingham, Mass. 01901.

Wizardry of Bose

He makes just about
the best speaker systems in the world

SOMETHING was wrong. The hi-fi system the young Amar Bose had just bought sounded awful—harsh, shrill—and he couldn't understand why. It was the spring of 1956, and Bose was completing his doctorate in electrical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After nine years of study, he certainly knew how to interpret the spec sheet that was supposed to rate his (mono) loudspeaker's performance. Like a good engineer, he'd selected the speaker by following

the numbers, without listening to it. It had nearly flat frequency response, low distortion, good transient response—so why, when he listened to a symphony through it, did it make dulcet violins sound like screeches? A violinist himself, Bose knew that real instruments didn't sound like that.

The hi-fi salesman assured Bose that his speaker wasn't defective. Then Bose listened to more expensive models: the better the high-end specs, the shriller the speakers soun-

ded. All he'd wanted was background music while he wrote his doctoral thesis on cybernetics. But as he finished up the paper, the hi-fi question nagged at him. How did such good specs get mixed up with such bad sound?

The answers turned out to be far more complex than he'd expected. Upon graduation, the twenty-seven-year-old Dr Bose was appointed to the MIT faculty (he continues to teach there), and he got permission to use the university's lab facilities for loudspeaker research. Sometimes he'd work all night and face a class at nine the next morning. But he was fascinated. What began as a project financed out of his own pocket became a full-scale, university-authorised investigation involving electronics, acoustics and psychoacoustics.

Eventually, Bose and a core group of five former students decided to put their findings to use in product design. They formed Bose Corporation in 1964; their first projects were sophisticated power-conversion devices for government use, such as a compact, high-efficiency, 2000-watt audioamplifier. In 1968, twelve years after Bose first heard those grating violins, Bose Corporation introduced its first consumer-electronics device, the Bose 901 Direct/Reflecting loudspeaker system.

The 901's design differs radically from every other loudspeaker on the market. It uses nine full-range drivers rather than separate woofers and tweeters. Only one of the nine drivers is directed at the listener; the other eight are mounted in the back panels of a pentagonal cabinet, pointed toward the wall in order to send reflected sound to the listener. As a result, the music being played seems to emanate from the wall itself, giving the aural illusion of a panoramic sound, while the forward-pointing speaker gives crispness and directionality. (The current version of this speaker, the Bose 901 Series IV, retails for \$859 a pair.)

Over the past decade, Bose Corporation has become one of the top loudspeaker manufacturers in the world; last year, the company grossed more than \$60 million in domestic and international sales. Along with the 901, the company now makes less expensive speakers, the Model 501 (\$484 per pair) and the Model 301 bookshelf speakers (\$242 per pair); the Interaudio-1 speaker for vans; equipment for performers, including PA speakers, power amplifiers and mixers; and newly introduced receivers and car-stereo products. But the 901 is still the company standard-bearer.

The headquarters of Bose Corporation are ensconced in an industrial park in Framingham, Massachusetts, about twenty miles outside of Boston. From the front, it's just another squat cinder-block building. But like the 901, the back is what makes the difference; there's a spectacular view overlooking the Sudbury Reservoir and its surrounding forest. Inside, the route to the executive offi-

ces leads through the factory area, where assembly-line workers manufacture drivers for the 901, finish construction of the speakers and perform quality control tests on all components made here and elsewhere (the company has factories in Puerto Rico, Ireland and Canada, and uses a number of outside suppliers for various parts). The factory is a clean, well-lighted place, decorated in lively kindergarten colors—bright green, blue, orange and red. It seems to have been designed to maximise employee comfort and dignity, the cafeteria, for instance, commands the best chunk of the view.

"GIVE people a nice place to work", Bose says proudly as we head toward his office, "and they'll keep it that way. There's no graffiti anywhere, even in Engineering. From the very beginning, we thought that a good environment was essential".

That includes the psychological environment, too—from details (there's no top-brass reserved parking in the company lot) to major decisions (the production staff decides its hours by general vote; on this spring day, they leave at 4:30 pm). And just like the more than 700 employees, Bose wears a photo-ID badge at his waist, a reminder of the plant's tight security. Although Bose's designs are trademarked and patented, he feels industrial espionage is still a threat. Before the ID system was adopted, "drawings of ours would turn up at other companies," Bose says. "You'd see someone with a briefcase and ask them who they were, and they'd just start running."

Bose is understandably perturbed by such shenanigans; his company stakes its reputation on rigorous, innovative research. "We looked around at the industry, and the thing that characterized it, then as now, was no research. Nothing that I would call research. That doesn't mean they didn't come out with new products. But if you compare the field to other fields, to other technologies—say, computers—the level of people you find is far higher elsewhere. I wanted the best people you could get."

We've reached Bose's office, which is in creative disarray; tagged sample chairs in bright, clashing colors reveal that the interior decorator hasn't made up his mind yet. Bose settles his six-foot frame into an orange desk chair; he seems almost boyish, despite his gray hair, far younger than his 49 years. When he talks about problem solving experiments of any sort—research—his eyes light up.

BOSE learned circuit design and its underlying principles, known as network theory. After some years of teaching experience, he wrote a textbook called *Introductory Network Theory*. MIT also put him in the habit of applying the scientific method. On one wall of Bose's office is a sheet of glass, mounted on a white background, with differential

equations written on it in an erasable pen—another experiment. The professor wanted something like a blackboard without the chalk-dust problem, and he found that erasable marking pens that wrote on glass were commercially available. He had Engineering make some test models—different backing colours, tinted glass, clear glass of various thicknesses—until he found the optimum design. The glass board comes in handy as Bose begins to describe the philosophy behind his speakers. One of Bose's first conclusions when he began studying speakers was that those specs that had been bothering him were irrelevant to real listening situations.

"There is no set of measurements today that characterises sound, that shows one loudspeaker is better than another," he asserts. "Once you get into the decent class of speakers, anyone who thinks he can separate these things by measurements is simply crazy. By 1959 we were able to show that these criteria, to which all the textbooks said you should design these things—like taking a loudspeaker into an anechoic chamber and making a flat frequency response—were wrong. But we weren't able to replace them with anything."

"I wanted the best people you could get"

That's where psychoacoustics came in. "You cannot design a system unless you understand something about the human," Bose argues, "because he is an integral part of it. If you could reproduce every single element of the sound in your living room—which you can pretty quickly show you can't do—then you've got it made. But when you can't do that, you immediately have to study what the human can sense and maximise the design for the things he's sensitive to. After experiments with the Boston Symphony out in Tanglewood, we finally learned that there is an enormous influence on the human created by the angle at which the sound arrives." (Today, psychoacoustics is a well-accepted parameter in the design of hi-fi equipment, including amplifiers and tuners. In loudspeaker design, the study of psychoacoustical phenomena has spawned a myriad configurations that take human hearing into account.)

"With conventional speakers, if you walk from right to left, the music follows you," he continues. "If that ever happens at a live performance, let me tell you what you were doing the night before. You see, direct-radiating loudspeakers were all designed for mono—the 901 is the first speaker that recognizes that the medium is stereo. We had to calculate angles and ratios correctly. If there was too little direct sound, you'd have a Muzak effect. And if there was too much

direct sound, it would be as bad as a conventional speaker." While other designers have used omnidirectional tweeters and side-firing woofers, Bose Corporation is the only speaker manufacturer to build for predominantly reflected sound. The 901's maverick design has met with a mixed response from audiophiles. When it was introduced, Julian Hirsch wrote in *Stereo Review*, "I have never heard a speaker system in my own home that could surpass or even equal the Bose 901 for overall realism of sound." But critics of the 901 argue that every sound coming through the system is rendered panoramically, that is, a guitar or solo violin can sound like it is twenty feet long.

ONE audio expert, who wishes to remain anonymous, suggests, "Some people like that large image—other people don't. Classical music fans educated in the balconies and standing-room area like that sound, but it isn't what everybody thinks of as real live sound. Dr. Bose is odd man out as far as the theory goes—but it is a coherent theory, not at all self-contradictory." Another audiophile remarks, "Dr. Bose has an almost messianic streak; he says that his theory is the only correct one. His theory is reasonable, but it's only one of many theories of sound reproduction. The reason that there are more than 300 speaker companies—and maybe thirty really creative ones—is that there is no single truth. What differentiates speaker A from speaker B is some sort of mystique. Bose has created a mythology for his speaker—a scientific rationale, his MIT credentials—and has definitely established a cult. He's making good speakers; you may not agree with his design, but you get value for your money."

Recently, Bose Corporation has begun to market its Spatial Control receiver, which is specifically designed to work in conjunction with the 901 Series III or IV. Along with typical receiver functions, says Bose, it can "change the mixing that goes on in the room of the different sound waves." By directing different frequencies to different drivers in the back of the 901, it can alter the perceived size of the audio image, thus perhaps ameliorating the solo instrument problem. The reviews are not yet in. "In the end, what really counts is what it sounds like," Bose says. "The only people who really know that are musicians. If you make your judgments with engineers, you have a huge problem."

Nevertheless, it is Bose's engineering ideas, as well as his musician's instincts, that have made Bose Corporation so prosperous. As we conclude the interview, Dr. Bose gazes at the sample chairs cluttering his office and says, "It looks as if we can't afford real office furniture." His eyes twinkle. "Then again, I'd rather spend the money on research."

Courtesy Rolling Stone magazine

A closely-held company

FOR the past two months, Mrs Indira Gandhi has been running her Government like a closely-held company. The chairman and the managing director — sometimes rolled into one — of a closely-held company are not answerable to the shareholders. The former are not at the sufferance of the latter but the latter are. In this style of functioning, journalists have often cut a sorry figure. They are not able to penetrate the closed-circuit of decision-making. Information also does not trickle down in the normal process. So there are hardly any scoops these days. But with such a style of functioning, it becomes difficult to prevent arbitrariness, whims and personal prejudices from getting the better of rational judgment. Let's assess what has happened in the last two months.

Unlike the Janata, Mrs Gandhi was not subjected to any group pressures in forming her Cabinet. Mr Morarji Desai had to contend with the claims of five Parties who for convenience sake called themselves the Janata. Still Morarjibhai selected all his Cabinet-rank Ministers within 48 hours of his being called to form the Government. But Mrs Gandhi couldn't. She also knows the job of the Prime Minister more thoroughly than anybody else. She knows full well the importance or otherwise of all the Central Departments. She, perhaps, does not require bureaucratic advice to make some alternative permutations and combinations of departments. Yet she did not choose her full team at the first instance. There is no rational explanation for this inaction. In this situation, it was natural that the country waited with keen interest for the second instalment of Cabinet-making. But the two-month wait did not prove rewarding. The second lot was a damp squib. What is most confounding is that in some Ministries like Defence and Industry, Ministers of State have been appointed but not full-fledged Ministers as yet. Some other critical Ministries — Steel and Mines and Labour are being looked after on a temporary basis. There can be no satisfactory answer for these. Some pro-Mrs Gandhi lobbyists are quick to assert that the Government work has not been suffering as a result of this. If so, then why have Ministers at all? The truth of the matter is that work at the economic Ministries has been virtually at a standstill.

Consider another major political decision taken by Mrs Gan-

Power and Politics



By KEWAL VARMA

dhi's Government. The dissolution of nine Assemblies. The first step was taken without knowing what will be the second step. First, Mrs Gandhi said that she would not do what the Janata did and she opposed it. But then all of a sudden she visited Narainpur in UP where the police committed atrocities. This whipped up the demand to dismiss non-Congress (I) Governments. The day when the nine state Governments were dismissed, it was all confusion. Late in the evening, the official spokesman had announced that no decision would be taken. But late at night, Rashtrapati Bhavan alerted that something was expected.



The decision reflects deep confusion in the Government. It is not clear how two constitutional hurdles will be crossed. First is the reservation of seats for scheduled castes and tribes. Second is Rajya Sabha's approval of the Presidential proclamation. The Government first maintained that the constitutional amendment to continue reservation of seats requires approval of state Assemblies but after the dismissal of the state Governments, it shifted its ground and asserted that it did not. The Government is not certain whether the President will accept its revised stand. Similarly, had the Government not delayed the decision, the Assembly elections could have been held within two months of the issue of proclamation. This would have circumvented the constitutional requirement to secure Rajya Sabha approval of the proclamation. But this was not thought of. If the Rajya Sabha does not approve the proclamation, it would create a constitutional

deadlock. If the decision-making process is not broad-based and is restricted to essentially one or two people, more often than not there is bungling.

An idea of the style of functioning that is emerging can be had from the two decisions on economic management — in fact these are the only two concrete economic decisions taken so far — communicated to the concerned Ministries by the Prime Minister's office. The first decision is that all important licensing applications will now have to be cleared by the Cabinet committee. The second is to supply to the PM's office all information about the composition of boards, councils and public sector enterprises. The Prime Minister takes great personal interest in the appointment of key personnel in the Government and quasi-Government departments. The Cabinet appointment committee to select key officials has not been set up. In Mrs Gandhi's scheme of things, it is the persons at key positions rather than policies that are more important in running a Government.

In this highly personalised style of functioning, it may be possible to run New Delhi municipality efficiently. Surely, if the entire country is sought to be run in this fashion, it will sooner or later create problems. The difficulty is that in such a scheme of things it may not be possible to comprehend problems till they assume alarming proportions. A proper appreciation of the dangers involved is possible only if three main factors are kept in mind. Social tensions are mounting in the country, particularly in its most populous heart-land. Second, the economic situation is fast slipping. Third, the 1977 and 1980 election results have shown that none of the major Parties has any permanent means of political sustenance, in the sense that the percentage of the committed vote is very small. The bulk of the electorate is floating. Arbitrary decision-making and continuing inaction in crucial areas can create an intractable political, economic and social situation. In the past, Mrs Gandhi swept such a crisis under the Emergency carpet. What will she do when a similar situation arises? The hopelessness of the Indian situation is that three years of rule of law, broad based decision-making and collective leadership have not shown a way out. One can only recall Marx who said: Events repeat themselves twice in history. First time as tragedy, second time as farce.



DRIVING OUT DEVILS



A GARWAL started hearing the Voices when he was 17. They boomed clearly out of nowhere, authoritative and terrifying, as he studied for his mid-term engineering exams at Allahabad University. *Give it up, they ordered him. The exams aren't worth the preparation. Stop! Stop! Stop!*

Agarwal was certain he wasn't mad, but he could not deny that the Voices sounded very real. Sometimes they were reasonable, sometimes seductive, sometimes they even seemed to be prescient. Once they commanded him to leave his books and go to a film show. Agarwal remonstrated with them, alone in his

C. Y. GOPINATH reports on Mehndipur, the village where evil spirits are exorcised

room, feeling a little foolish. "But it's already 3! The film starts at 3.30, and rickshaws..." *Silence!* shouted the Voices. *A rickshaw is waiting at the college gate. And today the film starts late, at 4. Now go!* To Agarwal's surprise, there was a rickshaw outside in the hot afternoon sun, and the film had not yet begun when he reached town at 3.45 p.m. But how had the Voices known?

Over the following months, Agarwal turned into an unresisting marionette of his malevolent tormentors.

They interfered in every detail of his life, becoming belligerent and abusive when he argued, purring happily when he yielded. Halfway through his session exams, they forced him to get up and leave, assuring him he'd done enough to pass well. Agarwal secured a first division, but refused to credit the Voices. He put it down instead to his habit of running through his notes half an hour before any exam and noting likely subjects. Invariably two or three of these turned up.

Nine months after he got his first job, as a trainee in an antibiotics factory in Rishikesh, the Voices made him resign, promising him a better job elsewhere. Agarwal found employment next as a shift engineer in Modi Steel, Modinagar. Work was difficult, for the Voices were constantly tempting him to shirk. Once, the control system of the galvanising plant broke down. Agarwal isolated the cause as a defective thermocouple, but the replacement was in a drawer whose key could not be found. *We've hidden it!* cackled the Voices. *And you won't get it back till you promise not to work any more today.* Agarwal finally surrendered.

The key is in your pocket! crowed the Voices triumphantly.

Agarwal learnt the hard way that it was no use fighting them. A year after he joined Modi Steel, they decided it was time for him to resign. Agarwal refused. The Voices promised him he would regret this insubordination. He dared them to do their worst. Within a week, Agarwal



A woman chants prayers for one of the possessed

was groaning in bed, convulsed by painful stomach cramps. The chief medical officer diagnosed colitis, but his prescription made no difference. A month later, Agarwal was discharged on medical grounds. The very next day, his cramps disappeared.

Agarwal and his invisible persecutors moved next to Meerut, his home. He easily found fresh employment here in the production and quality control department of a local industry. Months passed and one day his boss summoned him. "What bothers you?" he asked. "Your work is satisfactory, but your mind seems to be somewhere else. What are you thinking?"

For six years, Agarwal had kept his private hell a secret. He had no doubt by now that he was possessed by a battalion of demons. One had even started materialising before him. It seemed to be an old man with a long beard and a bead necklace. These apparitions had begun

soon after he saw a film called *Jhuk Gaya Asman* in which the hero, after his death, haunts the earth as a grey shadow. *That's what we look like*, the Voices had told him that night. *We may soon decide to show ourselves to you*. Agarwal blurted out, to his boss, the truth about the Voices that plagued him. Sympathetically, the company offered him a lien with half-pay, and urged him to seek some treatment.

In a graveyard in Meerut's cantonment area lived a *shaman* known as Jamaniya Bagh Wala Fakir. He heard Agarwal's story, and started a complicated exorcism. Finally, he held a lock of Agarwal's hair, and pronounced that the demons had been driven to refuge in it. "I cut it, and you are free!" he said, snipping it off. But that night, the Voices returned. *That old fool! they scoffed. He was no match for us. We gave him the beating of his life. You can't get rid of us so easily.*

Agarwal consulted more than 25 other exorcists and mystics before giving up hope altogether. The demons refused to let him die, but they could not be evicted by hexes and entreaties either. Then a friend told him about Mehndipur, the Rajasthani village to which hundreds of the "possessed" from all over North India turned after all else failed. Here, at the temple of Balaji, a manifestation of the monkey god Hanuman, they found release from their demons. In August 1974, Agarwal travelled to Mehndipur.

It nestles in a cleave between bald hills, a temple town of about 8,000 people. Overlooking it from the crest of the northern hill, is a lone whitewashed structure, the Pahadwala Baba Ka Mandir. The slope of the rocky southward hill, rising behind the Balaji temple, is disfigured by the cemetery slabs of a graveyard where "demons" have been laid to rest. Kites wheel in lazy circles above, swooping now and then to feast off mounds of rice and lentils thrown in the temple's backyard after consecration. Along Mehndipur's only road, smoky canteens sell oily sweets and meals. A plague of flies speckles the air, and open sewers and slime puddles add rancidity to the ethos. It is not a prepossessing town—but miracles happen in its temples, so they say.

There are three deities within the main temple building. On the ground floor is the vermilion idol of Balaji, guarded by a railing that admits only priests. In a small annexe is a large stone slab with a carved eye, the representation of Bhairoji. Upstairs is the domain of the Lord of the Demons, Pretraj Maharaj.

The "possessed" are the most arresting sights in Mehndipur: I saw a woman with wild, straggly hair, hissing and swaying violently; an elderly villager supine with his head in a gutter, moaning; a sooty, young girl, with a driven expression, no more than 20, sitting within a ring of kerosene fire, playing with the flames, while onlookers chanted the praises of Pretraj; within the temple, a lean villager, about 60, banging his head forcefully on the floor, while a relative whispered prayers in his ear, a young man in the Bhairoji temple swinging inverted as though slung on a pulley, and balancing on his head. These sights cause no comment among the thousands of other visitors in Mehndipur. To them, divine action seems commonplace.

Soon after arriving here, Agarwal made the first traditional temple offering, called *arzi*: $4\frac{1}{2}$ kilos of rice, $2\frac{1}{2}$ kilos of lentils (*urad*) and $1\frac{1}{4}$ kilos of *laddus*, which he bought for Rs 17.50 from a stall outside the temple. The *laddus* were consecrated at Balaji's altar, but the rice and *urad*, after being offered to the other two deities, were ritually fed to stray dogs, ravens, and kites in the temple's backyard. Next, Agarwal spent Rs 1.10 on more *laddus*, sugar puffs, and ghee — the obligatory second



One method of exorcism : a granite block on the leg.



Sukkar's mental growth has ceased

offering known as *darkas*. Two *laddus* were returned to him after sanctification, and he ate these. Then he waited. Nothing happened that day.

The next morning, he began to feel strange. His head swam and a curious turbulence filled him. A part of his mind seemed to be serenely detached, observing the turmoil. Presently, a convulsive fit seized him, and Agarwal felt himself tossed and flung about violently. Then, one by one, the Voices began to speak and identify themselves.

There were 18 of them. They cried out in agony, as though hounded by an invisible prosecutor. Reluctantly, they described the penances that could evict them. Under their instructions, Agarwal ran amok, found a laundry bat and began thrashing himself. The pain was supreme, but his physical endurance seemed to have grown almost supernaturally. During that month, he flushed out a few of the "demons", including the leader, the bearded apparition.

He returned to Mehndipur a few months later, and repeated the ritual. This time, he drove out four more demons. With his lifelong burden lifting at last, he married in June 1975. His wife agreed with him that their future happiness depended on his getting rid of all the "demons" for good. Accordingly, Agarwal decided to settle down within easy travelling distance of Mehndipur, and got a job in the Rajasthan State Electricity Board at Alwar. From here, he visited Mehndipur regularly, and continued the self-exorcism.

When I met Agarwal in February last year, I found a composed and dignified individual, who spoke gravely, in fluent English, about his progress. "There is only one demon left in me now," he said. "On this trip, I hope to be rid of him too. I've eaten the *laddus* this morning, and I hope to have my fit this afternoon."

"Are the *laddus* connected with your fits?" I asked him.

"You mean some chemical? No," he replied seriously. (Later, I tasted the *laddus* myself. Nothing unusual happened.) "There is no rational explanation for this thing. All I know is that I had 18 demons, now I have one, and soon I'll have none."

"What does your family feel?"

"They understand," he said. "It's a large family, a joint family. I'm the youngest, the ninth of five brothers and four sisters. Then there are uncles, aunts, grandparents—it's very large."

"How many?"

"Oh, seventeen—say, about 18."

A joint family of 18. A 12-year-old battle with 18 demons. Was there a connection? Could there be a rational, perhaps psychiatric, explanation for Agarwal's bizarre experience, and for the other "possessed" writhing in and outside Mehndipur's temple? I kept this in mind through every interview I conducted there. It seemed to me too facile, too convenient,

to dismiss such a mass, and apparently sociological, phenomenon, as the work of spooks and demons. I found, for example, that the god does not work equally well for all his supplicants. There was a strong element of the individual's own faith that the god would cure him. Where this faith was lacking, the cure was missing. Ashok Kumar was one such case.

SAW him first in the pillared hallway of the Pret-raj Temple, where between two and four every afternoon, about 250 of the "possessed" gather.

The rhythm of *bhajans*, led by the temple musicians, soon builds up a shaking, stomping fervour, that brings some of the "possessed" to their fits. I took a corner, next to a steel trellis door, and watched. A pretty teenager, eyes closed, skipped up and down between the seated congregation. Reaching the end of the



A young woman washes herself after a preliminary to exorcism

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aisle, she would throw herself with a reverberating clangour against the steel door. A gouty old villager, with an agility beyond his years, turned cartwheels, landing flat on his back each time with a sickening slap of bone on marble. Another fellow stood with his back to the shiny plaster wall, and flung himself against it. I watched the plaster crack along its length. But my attention was drawn most by a young man, about 23, who sat a few feet from me, his head between his knees, a sullen expression on his face. He was chained to the trellis.

I heard his story later that afternoon from his father, Murarilal Agarwal, a whiskered old man with sad, red eyes, who sat disconsolately on a mattress in a dharamsala. "When Ashok became a young man, I took him into my provisions store at Haldwani village, in Nainital district," he said. "Within 1½ years, he increased my shop's turnover by Rs 8,000. He would do well in business, I could see it."

Then, inexplicably, Ashok began disappearing for days together, losing interest in the shop. His baffled father discovered that a clerk in Ashok's college had introduced him to the temptations of gambling. "He began living in that clerk's house in Khullapur village—it is a village of voices," said Murarilal. "In three months, he squandered away Rs 8,000 of the shop's money. My money."

When Ashok returned home after a gap of several days, Murari reacted in the only way he had learnt. Grabbing a cane, he thrashed his son. To his surprise, Ashok, an adolescent on the threshold of manhood, went berserk. He smashed a radio costing Rs 900, and ranted vile abuse at his father. But the rage subsided, leaving him subdued and contrite.

"I don't know what possesses me," he confessed. But Murarilal had his suspicions. For a son to insult his father so, he must be going insane. Ashok continued to gamble, and his father continued to discipline him with the cane. Each time, Ashok would lose control of himself, becoming obscene and vituperative. Finally, Murarilal took him to the lunatic asylum at Bareilly. After three visits here, Ashok was interned for 22 days. The psychiatrist judged him normal at the end of it. But after two months, Ashok's old rebelliousness surfaced again. Murari, perplexed, took him to a number of doctors, spending almost Rs 13,000 before reaching a dead end. Then a neighbour suggested that Ashok was "possessed" by a demon. Why not take him to Mehndipur?

At Mehndipur, Ashok struggled and fought furiously, shouting that he didn't believe in demons and exorcisms, and would not attend the 'darbar' in the Pretraj temple. Finally, his relatives dragged him to the temple and chained him to the steel door. For 15 days, this has been his routine. At four, when he is released, he runs all the way back to the dharamsala. His father can see no change in him. He has



only grown more cowed and sulky, snarling and glowering at the world. Murari planned to return to Haldwani.

"Doctors and hospitals have failed, and now the god has failed," he told me bitterly. "It may be a matter of faith, I have a little, my son has none, I am resigned to having a lunatic son."

But if Mehndipur works because of the faith of its devotees, what are the "demons" that possess them? They puzzled me, because there seemed to be ready, rational explanations for them in the stories of the "possessed" and their relatives. In them, I felt the torture of asphyxiating joint families; the revolt of an adolescent against corporal punishment at his father's hands; the hopelessness of a young girl given away in marriage to an incompatible stranger; the paranoia of the shy person denied self-expression, who sees malice all around him; even the physical pain of a man with a curable disease that baffles the village quacks he consults. For each of these people, there is no recourse no vent to air their grievances, in the suffocating systems and divisions

of an old society in a new world. I began to wonder if these were not, after all, the ailments that were called "demons" and brought to the altar at Mehndipur. Here are some concrete instances:

H. S. Chetani, 32, owns an oil press in Nimkathana, Rajasthan. His problem was a purely physical one. About ten years ago, he began passing blood with his stools. He also developed agonising stomach cramps, that seemed to improve when he ate something. Often, while standing or walking, he suffered giddy spells. He consulted doctors in Nimkathana, who offered him only perfunctory diagnoses and placebos. He went to GPs in Lucknow and Jaipur, but fared no better. Then his uncle, who had cured himself of an identical problem in Mehndipur, recommended the Balaji temple.

Chetani went to Mehndipur in 1976. During his first fit, which came on at the end of a month there, the demon identified itself, and said an ill-wisher in Jaipur had cast a spell on Chetani one evening as he crossed the square near Jaipur's Sangarneri Gate.

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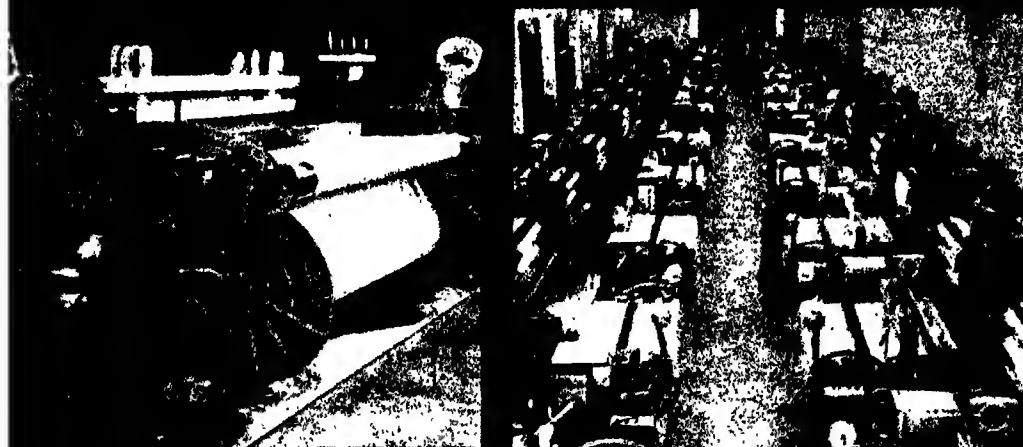
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During one of his fits, Chetani felt compelled to run barefoot up the rocky hill behind the temple. Here, obeying his other-worldly instructor, he threw himself off an escarpment, and fell six feet, impaling his right foot on a sharp projecting rock.

"It didn't bother me at all," he told me. "I just applied vermilion and ghee on it. Three days later, it had healed." He showed me a slight, but long, scar on his sole. "In all my visits here, I have never seen anyone hospitalised by injuries he sustained during a fit." Chetani's bleeding stopped in two months, and his stomach ache vanished. Ever since, he has been a regular devotee of the Balaji temple.

Veena Rani, eldest in a club merchant's family of five, was married four years back. Leaving her home in Pundri, Kurukshetra, she went to her husband's village, Goniana-mandi. He was the youngest son in a joint family of three brothers, four sisters, their parents, and some kin. A few months after the wedding,



Veena's father received a curt telegram from his son-in-law, saying that he should make arrangements to take his daughter back, as she was not keeping well. Alarmed, he went to Goniana-mandi at once, and found Veena almost paralysed. Her eyes were open, but she could not (or would not) speak, and lay rigid on the floor. She seemed to be suffering from some deep shock. A doctor in Rohtak examined her but could come to no conclusion.

Veena has not come out of her mysterious voluntary seclusion yet. I saw her, draped from head to toe in a blanket, on the floor of a dark room in a dharamsala. She does not sit up, must be force fed, and has showed no signs of improvement in Mehndipur, despite two visits. Her father is sure that the spirit possessing her must be very powerful indeed.

"Where is her husband?" I asked him.

"No word from him. In villages, when a wife falls ill, the boy's family has no more use for her. She becomes a burden."

"Was he cruel to her? Did Veena write to you after her marriage?"

"No letters since the wedding," said her father. "I cannot say how he treated her, or what drove her into this state...she used to be so good-natured and contented."

"Is Mehndipur the answer?"

"We trust in Balaji. He will do what he chooses, and that will be the best. We have no faith left in doctors."

The third case I want to cite is Ashok Toshniwal. I met him when he came up to stop us taking photographs. By fortune, we reached Mehndipur on the occasion of a grand celebration that occurs four times a year, on Holi, Dussehra, Diwali, and Hanuman Jayanthi. The prayers, attended by thousands, are held on the other side of the northern hill, and a pyre is lit to "incinerate the demons." Photography was forbidden, and at the sight of our cameras, Ashok Toshniwal, who seemed to have some authority, accosted us. "Do you have the Mahant's permission?" he asked us.

"Who is the Mahant?" I asked him.

"Come with me," he said, and led us away from the crowd, back into town.

Ashok, about 30, is a person I would not have noticed had I passed him on the street. Far from looking mystic, he is an ordinary fellow, somewhat lean, with a forgettable face, dressed in gaudy, mismatched trousers and shirt. Yet Ashok is one of a handful of people, who, after undergoing the ordeal of cure in Mehndipur, developed so-called oracular powers. Ashok described this as a sort of spiritual knighthood conferred by Balaji, bestowing extraordinary clairvoyance on the receiver. Ashok told me his powers were common property, available to anyone in need of answers. By meditation, he could work himself into a prophetic trance. Any questions put



The traditional offerings of 'darkas'—la

to him in this state would be answered by one of the deities he had access to. Each deity, Ashok told me, wreaks a different effect on the oracle's body. When Pretraj, Bhairaji, or Balaji speak through him, the aftermath brings severe bodily pains. Kali causes an aching tongue. Lalji (Krishna) and Shankarji (Shiva) demand prolonged trances which leave the oracle spent of energy.

The problem that led Ashok to this sublimated stage was routine enough. Attending a wedding in Sili-guri in 1972, he felt a sharp stab of pain in his chest, which forced him to miss the rest of the ceremony. The pain continued unabated thereafter. Ashok began losing his appetite, and was soon reduced to almost a skeleton. He consulted doctors for 1½ years, but no one could offer a diagnosis. X-rays taken in Kanpur, where he runs a cloth and grain store, showed nothing wrong. Medicines having failed, Ashok concluded he was "possessed". The first exorcist he called, a man called Mishraji, from Bangladesh, didn't succeed in a cure.

Then a relative of his wife's, in Bhirpara in North Bengal, sent a message saying Ashok should go to



Mehndipur immediately. The relative, himself a Balaji devotee, had undergone a cure at Mehndipur years ago, and developed oracular powers. At Mehndipur, Ashok underwent the seizures and penances, and after two visits, found himself finally rid of the dogged chest pains and other symptoms.

"Can you get into a trance at will?" I asked him.

"Yes," he replied. "But it is a sacred power, not to be played with. If you had genuine questions, then it is valid to consult an oracle. Not to test."

LIKE many of Mehndipur's visitors, Ashok had met Kishore Puri, the Mahant (Respected One), of the Balaji temple, and had written an account of his cure in the Mahant's register. He now led us into the Mahant's sanctum. I was totally unprepared for what I saw.

The Mahant sits in a darkened room, in the building that adjoins the Balaji temple. Light hurts his left eye, which was damaged by a childhood attack of small-pox. The disease has left him pocked, but Kishore Puri nevertheless conveys a soft-

spoken aura of control and assurance. His living quarters were the biggest surprise of all, a study in worldliness. A holstered revolver hung on the wall ("Just a custom. For protection.") and next to the mattress where he reclined was a shiny red plastic telephone. In the corner was a TV set covered with polythene. Nearer, there was a public address system's standing mike, through which the Mahant or his deputies make announcements that are heard all over Mehndipur. Kishore Puri seemed eager to withhold nothing from us.

"I am the 16th in a line of Mahants who have run this temple," he said. "From this you may calculate that the temple is about 960 or 1,000 years old. My ancestor — the first Mahant — had a dream in which he saw the location of a buried idol in these hills. He ignored it, but Balaji came to him in a second dream to tell him that it was his duty to unearth the idol and make its power known. That's how the temple began. Balaji's powers to cure the sick and vanquish demons were famous in this area, but it was very hard to reach this place. The nearest railway stations were Bandikui and Mandav. There was no road. Only about 50 years ago, in my predecessor Ganesh Puri's time, was the road built. Since then, thousands have poured in from all over India. We now have 40 dharamsalas for them."

At this moment, the postman was ushered in with a stack of money orders. The Mahant excused himself to inspect them. Here was a phenomenon I had never encountered — mail-order exorcism. The money orders, explained the Mahant, came from some of the "possessed" who could not stay for the whole cure at Mehndipur. Before leaving, they made a "pact" with Balaji, through the Mahant, promising to return after a specified number of months. The Mahant granted them, on Balaji's behalf, a reprieve from the "demons" during this period. The money orders were from those who, for some reason, could not keep their pledge to return. They sent money orders for an *arzi* and a *darkas* to be made by the Mahant on their behalf, and sought an extension of the reprieve from the "demon".

I had classified the Mahant as a shrewd businessman at first glance. From his room, from his person, I was ready to discover that Mehndipur is a hoax carefully perpetrated on a gullible public. I confess, however, that after speaking to him for over an hour, I began to find him disarming and vulnerable rather than obnoxious. The Mahant is a man who might have been a farmer but found himself instead running a temple. He seems pleased to belong to a divinely chosen dynasty of temple guardians, but I do not think he has ever given thought to the supernatural. To him, it is neither awesome nor noteworthy, but merely routine. He was unruffled by my most pointed questions, serenely above taking offence.

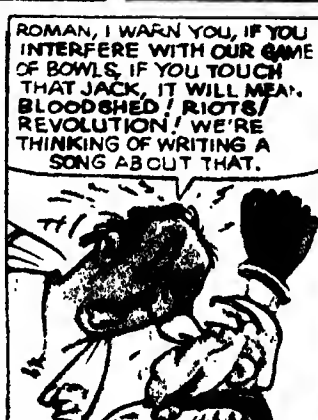
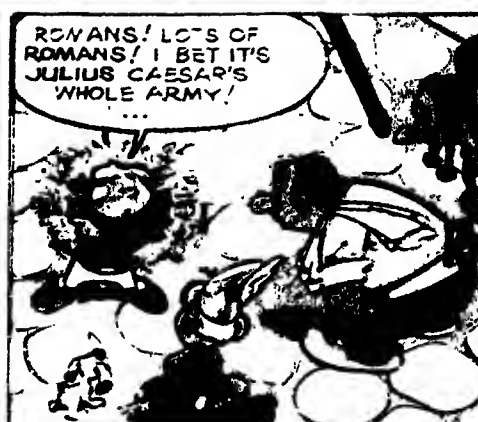
"The temple must be quite rich," I said, "what with money orders coming in every day."

"Oh, this money is nothing," he said, dismissing the small pile of money orders with a wave of his hand. "Much larger donations come from other grateful pilgrims. Some even build dharamsalas. The temple gets quite a lot of money. Fortunately, I own a considerable amount of land about 10 km from here, and have no need to be richer. The temple uses the money to feed thousands of Brahmins every day." I watched this ceremony a little later, but I would not say there were more than about 200 in the feeding line.

"What makes Mehndipur work?" I asked him.

For a moment, he looked as though the question had never occurred to him. Then, he replied, "Nothing. People come here expecting miracles, and they come with faith. You have seen our temples. We have only about 40 workers, including the priests, but no exorcists."







HURRY UP, OBELIX. I'D LIKE TO GET TO TOLOSA* AS SOON AS WE CAN.

IT'S NEARLY DARK...



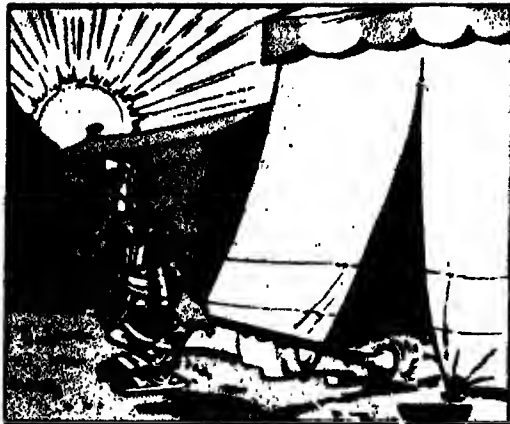
THERE YOU ARE, WHAT DID I SAY? CAN'T SEE A THING.

WELL, LET'S STOP HERE FOR THE NIGHT, OBELIX. WE CAN GO ON IN THE MORNING.



GOOD NIGHT, ASTERIX.

GOOD NIGHT, OBELIX.



TANTANTAN TARA

??



ARE THOSE NEW RECRUITS?

NO! IT'S THE TWO GAULS!!

WE'VE SPENT THE NIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF A ROMAN CAMP!

WHAT LUCK!

QUICK! GET THEM! WE'LL TAKE THEM TO PREFECT ADIPUS AT TOLOSA!



THERE ARE QUITE A LOT OF THEM. I'LL JUST TAKE A DROP OF MAGIC POTION...

MIND IF I START WITHOUT YOU, ASTERIX?

GET THEEEFER!



AND A FEW MINUTES LATER THE ROMANS HAVE BLOWN A REVELLE...

I'VE BEEN THINKING, OBELIX... THAT ROMAN WANTED TO TAKE US TO TOLOSA. IT WOULDN'T BE A BAD IDEA TO LET THE ROMANS GIVE US TRANSPORT, WOULD IT?

NO... BUT WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT A BIT BEFORE WE CAN SUGGEST IT...



Kishore Puri, the guardian of the Temple, sits in a building that adjoins it

The people cure themselves, by the strength of their own faith. Balaji is powerful for those who believe in him."

THE next day, I was myself called upon to make a powerful leap of faith, when I unexpectedly came upon an oracle in a trance. We had met considerable opposition to photography from the pilgrims, despite the Mahant's permission. Finally, Elizabeth had sneaked with her camera into the school building neighbouring the temple, in an attempt to take pictures of the "darbar of the possessed" in the Pretraj Temple. However, she had to give up, unable to find a suitable vantage. Somewhat dejected, we walked towards the outskirts of the village, to the site of the previous day's prayer festival. Here we saw a small group sitting around a stubble-faced man of about 30, who was swaying slightly with his eyes closed, and answering a village woman's questions in a low monotone. We were shushed by an onlooker as we drew near.

"Make no sound," he said. "Balaji is speaking."

"We would like to take pictures," I whispered. He hesitated. "Ask the

oracle," I urged him.

Interrupting the woman, he addressed the oracle. "Balaji maharaj, forgive my rudeness," he said deferentially. "There are people here from the city, who wish to take your photograph. They plan to write about the miracles of your temple. If you could—" His voice trailed away, for a frightening change was coming over the oracle. His face reddened gradually, and his breathing grew jerky, coming in hisses and spurts. He began rocking to and fro where he sat, until I thought he would keel over. Finally, he exploded "NO! Boy, I forbid you to take pictures! You have already tried to take photographs of the Pretraj darbar by stealth this afternoon. I warn you not to do this. It is not good."

I was rattled. Elizabeth insisted I was being glib, that he must have got word of our attempts at photography through someone. Possibly he did, but this required a chain of too coincidental events: someone must have seen Elizabeth in the school building; that someone, without knowing that we would later be with the oracle, must have rushed, in the space of about half an hour, to the outskirts of the village to inform the oracle. Our own decision to walk

in that direction was arbitrary, taken on the spur of the moment. Most of all, the oracle did not open his eyes while I stood by, but addressed me directly as "Boy!" Had he been already primed about our activities, I would have thought it more likely that he would address Elizabeth, the photographer.

In balance, I must decide to suspend judgment. In thinking back on Mehndipur, this incident alone cautions me against jumping to easy conclusions. I see possible explanations for many of the "possessions". But Mehndipur also has aspects that only a parapsychologist — perhaps with a sociologist and a psychiatrist — may be competent to analyse.

For the thousands of others who turn to Mehndipur for an answer, it may indeed be a matter of faith: Chetani, with his ulcer-like abdominal complaints; Toshniwal and his mysterious chest pains; Agarwal and his terrifying Voices; even Murarilal and his "lunatic" son, atting faithless in the dharamsala; and Veena Rani, muted by some marital trauma too deep to tell. In the villages, small towns, even cities, that they come from, they can find no answers. Failing with doctors, hospitals, courts of law and counsellors, they peg their faith on the Balaji temple. They find answers, because of the strength of their need for them.

Psychiatry might be able to explain Agarwal's Voices. For example, he may already have been subconsciously aware of the rickshaw at the gate, and a scheduled delay in the movie's timings, but allowed the Voices — "auditory hallucinations" — to bring it to his consciousness. He may have self-censored the knowledge of the missing key being in his pocket all the time, until the Voices pointed it out. Most telling, he began seeing the demons as apparitions only after a Hindi film showed him how it was possible. These explanations achieve nothing. Agarwal would tell you that himself.

The demons? Back in Jaipur, I saw a movie-hall commercial that shrewdly took advantage of the average Indian's readiness to ascribe anything he does not understand to "demons". The ad was for a laundry soap, but the dirt was shown as a possessing spirit. The detergent was the exorcist, shining white, that irresistibly roots out the evil.

After two days in Mehndipur, I was not sure any more whether I had brushed with a twilight world, or seen a commune ridden with the contemporary demons of a society that has been unable to regulate itself or adequately resolve its own contradictions. It is easier for a villager in India to believe that a demon is harassing him than that the village dispensary is curing him. Mehndipur is a window into the private hell of the average Indian in his society. If that is possession, then, may God help us, we are all possessed.

This is a **SOL** Feature.

Photographs by Elizabeth Saldanha (SOL)

The car with an identity



You can't miss a Krilo car

The never-being brilliance
of metallic shades

The dazzle of pure colour

And the luxury of

a perfectly glossy finish.

That's the unmistakable
touch of Krilo. The pure
acrylic car paint that sets
your car apart from the rest.

* Durable gloss. Requires
little repainting, if at all.

* Tough acrylic film resists
adverse weather conditions.

* Worth its price.



KRILLO

India's first pure
acrylic car paint.

**asian
paints**



Dom Moraes nearly missed the bus

WHILE it is a matter of some rebel that the customs authorities of Bombay have, at long last, withdrawn their objection to Dom Moraes' new book on Bombay in the Time-Life series on Great Cities, the episode should serve to focus attention on the vagaries of the authorities and the inadequate protection which the law provides against them to the citizen. They objected apparently to certain passages in the book's description of religious festivals and the city's notorious cages in the red light district on Fortis Road. A double-page photograph of the Tower of Silence near the Hanging Gardens, evidently taken with tele-lens from a skyscraper nearby, was particularly frowned upon. Ved Mehta's *Portrait of India* had also run in to similar trouble. So, believe it or not, had Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* over which the authorities had sat for more than a month.

The mere power to delay the release of a book is by itself a potent one. It can be used to deny information to the people on a matter which is the subject of a keen controversy. But the law confers extensive powers on the Central Government and provides no legal check against their abuse except a writ petition to the High Court. Section 11(1) of the Customs Act, 1962 provides: "If the Central Government is satisfied that it is necessary so to do, for any of the purposes specified in sub-Section (2), it may, by notification in the official Gazette, prohibit either absolutely or subject to such conditions (to be fulfilled before or after clearance) as may be specified in the notification, the import or export of goods of any specified description". Sub-Section (2) lists twenty such purposes; to cite a few: "The maintenance of the security of India," "the fulfilment of obligations under the chapter of United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security," and "the prevention of dissemination of documents containing any matter which is likely to prejudicially affect friendly relations with any foreign State or is derogatory to national prestige". Listed last is the omnibus clause, "Any other purpose conducive to the interests of the general public." It is deliberately vague and can include anything the Government wishes to prohibit.

Eventually, everything depends

Civil Liberties



By A. G. NOORANI

on the Central Government's subjective satisfaction. It may impose a ban even after a consignment of books has been cleared; the ban may be total or conditional and the Section gives no indication of the kind of conditions the Government might impose. Section 155(1) of the Act

Dom Moraes



bans the remedy of a lawsuit proper. It says: "No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against the Central Government or any officer of the Government or a local authority for anything which is done, or intended to be done in good faith, in pursuance of this Act or the rules or regulations".

In contrast Section 96 of the Criminal Procedure Code 1973 enables "any persons having any interest" in a book forfeited by a state Government to apply to a special Bench of three judges of the High Court to set aside the order. Also, Section 95 of the Code makes it obligatory for the state Government to record "the grounds of its opinion" before making the order of forfeiture and to declare them in a public notification. There is no reason why similar safeguards of public accountability and prompt legal redress should not be available to the author, publisher, dealer or, for that matter, a reader who imports a book if the Central Government bans its entry into the country.

It can be argued that Section 11 of the Customs Act is violative of more than one fundamental rights and is, therefore, void. For example, it confers on the executive power unfettered by any guidelines and is, thus, a virtual carte blanche for arbitrariness. It clearly offends the guarantee to equality before the law.

The violation of the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression is no less patent. This right cannot be exercised by a blank mind, as it were, and is rendered meaningless if the citizen is denied information or literature. Implicit in the right to freedom of speech is the right to receive information. Article 19 of the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights lays down: "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice". The Declaration on Mass Media adopted by the UNESCO in 1978 groups them together — "the exercise of freedom of opinion, expression and information".

It is time public opinion asserted itself and demanded a drastic curtailment of the Government's power to shut out any literature of which it disapproves.

Government by the people?

By BHOLA CHATTERJI

WITH the problems of fast expanding frontiers of knowledge, phenomenal development of science and technology, rigidly controlled political societies, ruptured human relations within and between nations and of affluence and poverty becoming more acute, the individual is likely to find himself increasingly trapped in a blind alley of despondency and despair. His freedom will wither, personality shrivel and his ability to think and act for himself reduce to nullity. Is there no escape from this? There is—in those parts of the world where democracy is not a dirty word. This is the message of the volume under review. The book, edited by Dan A. Chekki, contains 14 essays plus the editor's introduction and epilogue. The contributors, who are obviously familiar with their subject, deal with various facets of participatory democracy in the context of the community development experiment in certain western countries as well as in India. They raise several questions not all of which admit of improptu answers.

Participatory democracy and community development are not interchangeable terms—the one does not automatically imply the other. Much as participatory democracy and community development have very many common characteristics and are required to deal with identical problems, there is one significant point which marks off their respective provinces. As Francis J. Bregha aptly puts it in his foreword to the book: "Whereas for community development participation is a means towards an end (i.e. development), to those beholden to the belief that democracy must be direct, personal and egalitarian, participation becomes an end in itself".

The emphasis on participatory democracy as distinct from representative democracy, which is the vogue word in the democratic countries, is not difficult to understand. For the shortcomings of representative democracy are far too many. Notwithstanding that John Stuart Mill would recommend it as "the supreme, in fact, only credible mode of non-authoritarian government", representative democracy is incapable of responding to the challenge that man faces today. Apparently, it ensures through universal adult franchise people's participation in the political process, not excluding decision-making. The rea-

lity, however, is different. Could it be denied that in a representative democracy, even in the developed countries, not to speak of the underdeveloped third world countries where it is still tolerated, "elected office seems to be accessible", as Chekki says, "primarily to those at the higher levels of the socioeconomic stratum"?

We might recall Jayaprakash Narayan's views on the subject. He could often be heard to say, and quite rightly too, that decision-making in a democracy had become the privilege of a minuscule expert-elite fraternity. Indeed, the conventional concept of parliamentary democracy or Government by consent, Jayaprakash emphasised, had degenerated into a matter of form without substance. He did not let the matter rest there. If democracy were to become meaningful in the life of every individual member of society, if it were to tackle today's problem and respond to tomorrow's challenge, it must acquire a new dimension. And Jayaprakash was convinced that "the next step beyond government by consent is people's participation in government, or a participating democracy". To realise this decentralisation of both political and economic powers would be absolutely necessary.

The most relevant point is that in a participatory democracy participation cannot be a command performance, it must be "an act of free will". This is worth emphasising because many authoritarian political systems in a large number of third world countries are often labelled as grass roots or participatory democracies. Participatory democracy requires citizen participation in the political process; it calls for a grass roots approach involving every adult member of society in the decision-making process.

Participatory democracy has no dearth of critics. Their argument is that it is impractical, utterly utopian and, therefore, to be dismissed without much ado. It had perhaps some relevance in Aristotle's Athens, but it is totally irrelevant in the present context, the critics assert. For the business of managing the state machinery today is too complex to permit citizen participation in the decision-making process. To such dyed-in-the-wool exponents of the expert-elite concept the answer is that if the in-

sistence is on using, in the words of Franz Fanon which Chekki quotes, "only a language that is understood by graduates in law and economics, you can easily prove that the masses have to be managed from above. But if you speak the language of every day, if you are not obsessed by the perverse desire to spread confusion and to rid yourself of the people, then you will realize that the masses are quick to seize every shade of meaning and to learn all the tricks of the trade".

The close inter-relations between participatory democracy and community development are much too evident to be disputed. There is a certain similarity between the problems which participatory democracy faces and which confront community development. In fact, "the ends of community development are the effective realization of participatory democratic ideals". The long and the short of the argument is that, for participatory democracy to become a reality it must necessarily begin at the beginning, that is, with community development. K. S. Gangrade turns the focus on the quarter-century-old story of the Indian experiment with community development. The idea behind the community development programme was great, but the planners have sadly failed to realise it. What was a grand scheme to help India's nearly 600,000 villages to help themselves to change their conditions of life has become just another cog on the wheel of the gigantic bureaucratic machine that North Block operates.

In his epilogue Chekki emphasises the need for "research and theory-building" in regard to community development. There is a point in what he says, but it should at the same time be remembered that too much stress on this particular aspect would in all likelihood turn the whole thing into an esoteric academic pursuit. It is one thing if the emphasis is on systematic empirical research, quite another if it happens to be on "theory-building", particularly considering that India's so-called social scientists are a cursed lot that survives on borrowed Western ideas and deals mostly with what is of marginal relevance to society.

Participatory Democracy in Action—International Profiles in Community Development, edited by Dan A. Chekki, Vikas Publishing House(P) Ltd. Rs 125.



Who says nothing is perfect?

There are some things before
which mankind's most depressing
cliche, 'Nothing is perfect'
crumbles.

The circle, for instance.

A figure whose line is amazingly
equidistant, at every point, from
the centre.

It's perfect.

Much like the suiting and shirting
Jiyajee gives you.

They come with design perfection,
blend perfection and weave
perfection.

Come take a look at them. You'll
know you've finally found the
perfect fabric.

Your fabric.



ROADWAY SUITING • NIGHT STAR SUITING

ACPIPER SHIRTING • DOLFIN SHIRTING

JIJAJEE

ERANE SUITING • SHIRTING

CONVERSATIONS

SUSAN GRAHAM MINGUS sat talking to me in a motor-boat that was taking us across the Ganga. A strong breeze tousled her long unpinned hair as she reminisced about her illustrious husband. Last year she brought her husband's ashes to be immersed in the river. And this year she brought his music.

Susan Graham Mingus is the widow of Charlie Mingus, who, as one of the most imposing musical personalities in jazz, became a legend in his lifetime. But what is more, Susan was Charlie's fifth wife and the woman he was living with until he perished at the age of 56, a victim of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. "It was a cruel disease. His muscles slowly disintegrated. He couldn't move his limbs, he lost his speech, and he was confined to a wheelchair. But musically Charlie was never finished. He was growing in ideas and originality when death finally came

Susan Mingus



'The Mingus touch is alive'

SUSAN MINGUS told RANJAN BANERJEE in an exclusive interview

in the form of an enormous heart attack to end his suffering", said Susan.

While Charlie's four ex-wives didn't seem to be bothered, Susie Mingus troubled her head about the future of the Mingus music. "I know all his wives. They are all alive. I suppose they all had their contributions to make to Charlie's career", remarked Susie Mingus. She was being modest. It's anybody's guess what would have happened to the Mingus music if this American blonde didn't peg away at keeping her husband's music alive.

"Charlie was an embittered and an angry man when he died. But he was still very creative. And he was composing great music out of his wounded feelings, and out of his enormous appetite for life. When he died he left behind for us some of the finest music of his time. And I thought it was my duty as the woman he loved and lived with to keep the Mingus touch alive and to take his music all over the world," she observed. Therefore, Susie, once a very controversial personality as the writer/publisher of the notorious underground publication *Changes*, became the founder of the seven-piece Mingus Dynasty, which has come to be recognised today as one of the world's most complete and talented jazz groups. Although many of the greatest Mingus players like Eric Dolphy, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, and Booker Ervin who played with Charlie Mingus haven't lent their genius to the new Dynasty, its fluctuating membership includes Ted Curson, rated eighth among trumpeters of the world; Jimmy Knepper, inviting comparison with Johnson as a trombonist; Hugh Lawson, an ex-



Charlie Mingus

tremely creative pianist; George Adams, one of the most individualistic tenor sounds today; Mike Richmond, probably New York's most gifted bassist; John Handy, an alto saxophonist of formidable talents; and Dannie Richmond, who left his saxophone at Mingus's suggestion to become a drummer of supreme skill.

The sole objective of the Mingus Dynasty, ever since it was founded in 1979, has been to perpetuate the musical bequest of Charles Mingus and to reflect his spirit.

The Mingus Dynasty played recently in Calcutta for the first time. "Charlie had a deep sense of attachment to India, although he never came here. When it finally looked as if he could really come here, India wasn't quite the right place for his kind of a man. He loved freedom and set off tremors whenever he spoke and he wouldn't have liked things as they were during the Emergency. And when things were right and he could have come, he wasn't there. But last night as we performed here, we felt he was here with us, urging us to give of our best," said Susan.

Charlie Mingus was an angry man. And his anger often spilled over in diatribe against audiences for inattentiveness and failure to respond. How would this man who, unable to cope with his frustration and anger, once committed himself to a psychiatric ward, have reacted to the Calcutta audiences? "I think Charles would have loved to play here. Maybe many in the audience were exposed to this kind of music for the first time. Maybe, many of them responded rather naively. But what was obvious was that they were listening and trying to take in as much as they could. They were not indifferent. And their response was spontaneous. Charlie would have liked that", said Susan Graham Mingus.



An irreparable error

Will three-year-old Nazreen lose her sight?



Rahim

Nazreen in the hospital

THREE-YEAR-OLD chubby Nazreen Banu is now blind, thanks to the callousness of two surgeons in the Government-run Sarojini Devi Hospital in Hyderabad. Both the surgeons — Dr Vikramsimha Reddy and Dr Dayanand Reddy — have been suspended by the Director of Medical Services. However, that is no comfort to the parents of the child: Mrs Mehmooda Bee and Mr Hyder Khan.

It happened this way: on February 22, 1980 the young girl was taken to the hospital's operation theatre for removal of the cancer-affected left eye. Dr Vikramsimha Reddy had taken up the case and somehow it had been mentioned on the case sheet that the right eye was affected by cancer. On the day of the operation, Dr V. Reddy had taken leave to attend a court case. Consequently, the onus had fallen on Dr D. Reddy who was in the outpatient department. He was called in to operate at very short notice.

After a perfunctory look at the case sheet, Dr Dayanand Reddy took out the right eyeball which, in fact, was in perfect condition. The hospital staff who were in the operation

theatre were "mightily pleased" at the operation. Their happiness was, however, short-lived. As soon as the child was brought out of the theatre in a wheel-chair with the right eye bandaged, the young girl's alert father screamed, grasping what had happened to his daughter. The hospital staff soon learnt of the family's tragedy. As soon as Dr Dayanand Reddy learnt of the horrible blunder he had committed he was seen sweating profusely. At first, he thought of going home but changed his mind. The hospital's superintendent, Sunder Ram Sharma, immediately reported the matter to the Director of Medical Services who ordered the suspension of the surgeons. Care was taken to keep the case sheet in protective custody to prevent possible tampering. The case created a furore in the hospital and there was a general feeling of apprehension among a section of the patients.

Enquiries revealed that this was the first case of negligence on the part of the doctors in the Sarojini Devi Hospital, which is regarded as one of the best medical institutes in this country. The suspended doctors

had more than 10 years' experience each as surgeons. Both the doctors, however, are said to be fairly influential and connected with the high-ups. This has to be viewed in the context of the tragic episode not surfacing even after eight days of its occurrence. Neither the Medical Directorate nor the Government of Andhra Pradesh bothered to take the public into its confidence. A chance report filed by the United News of India and a local daily telling of the tragedy, caused a furore in the Vidhan Sabha when the Congress (I) member, K. Keshav Rao, raised the issue. The State's Health Minister, A. Madan Mohan, was less than humble while dealing with the incident, until indignant members demanded that the Government should go to any length to explore the possibilities of repairing the damage to the child's eye. Only then did Mr Madan Mohan give a positive assurance to the members of the House.

The hospital authorities, meanwhile, have been faced with another problem. A problem perhaps, more serious in nature. They have to attend to the affected left eye which certainly has to be removed so that cancer does not spread to the other parts of the body which may prove to be fatal. This correspondent met the mother and daughter who are now in the hospital. It was the mother who pathetically recounted the tragedy that had befallen their family. Surprisingly, she narrated that tale without a trace of bitterness. She was more struck by sorrow than anger. The child's condition was pathetic. I heard Nazreen say in lisping Urdu: "Muje dikta nahin" (I can't see). Before the operation, the fair-complexioned girl was a star attraction in the ward as she was playful and always used to run about in the ward. She does so even now, though hesitantly as she is in total "darkness". Mehmooda Bee says that she wants her child's sight restored with the best of treatment available in the world. Although her husband is a lowly-paid technician in a public sector factory, Mrs Bee is intelligent enough to grasp that there is a good deal of public sympathy for her misfortune. This she knows by hearsay as the newspaper reports along with photographs of herself and Nazreen which have been published in the newspapers. While the immediate task of the doctors is to remove the left eye, specialists say it is impossible to restore sight to the child's right eye. Meanwhile, the doctors may not only lose their jobs but may also lose their registration of the All-India Medical Council. They might be jailed, too.

*A CORRESPONDENT,
Hyderabad*

Kerala may face hard times

If the Gulf bonanza is over

UNTIL recently, the influx of Gulf money to the tune of Rs 500 crores a year was "playing mischief" with the economy of Kerala. Now, with the enforcement of new labour laws in some of the Gulf countries, especially the United Arab Emirates, nearly a lakh of Keralites are awaiting the order of the authorities to return to India. As the exact number of Keralites in the UAE is not known to the authorities, either the Centre or in the state, the actual number of people who would be rendered jobless, can be known only when they are actually repatriated. Now the headache for the Kerala Government, is not the "mischief" played by Gulf money on the state's economy, but the prospects of the return to Kerala of a huge army of men looking for new jobs. The employment exchanges in Kerala show the number of unemployed people as 11 lakhs.

The state's Marxist Chief Minister Mr E. K. Nayanar has been pressing the Centre to take up the matter with the foreign authorities through diplomatic channels. According to latest information, the date for the return of the Keralites (as well as other foreigners) without proper travel documents or regular employment agreements, has been extended by four months. So, in effect there has been only a postponement of the inevitable.

Keralites in the Gulf blame two Kerala Ministers—Mr C. H. Mohammed Koya and Mr Baby John—of the former Government, who visited the Gulf countries towards the end of 1978 to persuade the Keralites there to invest their earnings in productive ventures in Kerala. It has been alleged by a Keralite working in the Gulf that these Ministers "unnecessarily" gave wide publicity to the fabulous earnings of Keralites which they claimed was to the tune of 500 crores. According to him, this "exaggerated figure" of the flow of petro-dollars outside the Gulf countries, along with the known presence of several thousands of Keralites without proper travel documents and employment agreements, prompted the UAE authorities to start an "operation expulsion." Chowghat, Attingal, Varkala, Kadakkavoor, Muruvkkumpuzha and Trivandrum in Kerala which prospered through Gulf money have now become gloomy centres. Friends and relatives of employees in the Gulf are keeping their fingers crossed. A number of the Keralites had "smuggled their way" into the "Arab Paradise", with the help of self-styled recruiting agents. There are people who incurred debts to the tune of



E. K. Nayanar, Kerala CM

Rs. 25,000, which they had raised for securing an "N. O. C." (No objection certificate). Many of them have not been able to repay the loans. Their properties stand mortgaged. Such persons will have no means of livelihood when they are repatriated.

Under the new labour laws in the UAE, an employee is not free to switch over to another job; he is expected to stick to the job for which he was originally sponsored. It is learnt that a large number of Keralites had used the "N.O.C" to gain entry into the "Land of Opportunities", and later went in for new jobs which were more paying. People whose visas have expired will also be packed home. Re-entry would be allowed only after a gap of one year from the date of leaving. Nearly 70 per cent of the immigrant labour in UAE is from Kerala.

According to reports received here,

the immigrant labourers have been asked by the UAE authorities to sort out their visa problems before June 21. An illegal immigrant, according to the authorities is one who does not have an authorised sponsor. The four months' grace allowed is applicable to all those who held valid travel documents, a residence permit, and a labour card, but were working for people other than their original sponsors. Now, it is clear that the persons who had entered the country illegally, or those who stay without valid papers, will be in trouble. Keralites in the Gulf countries, including the UAE are of three categories—those who went on the strength of legal travel documents, job agreements, etc, those who went on the basis of "NOCs", but changed their jobs and lastly those who have reached there illegally without any kind of travel documents or even employment agreements. It is believed that the second and third categories are to be affected by the new laws.

The impact of the new legislation is now being felt in Kerala. There has been a 50 per cent drop in applications for passports at Cochin and Calicut. The rush at the office of the Protector of Emigrants has come down considerably, from 2,000 per day to a meagre 200. There is also a noticeable drop in the number of passengers to the Gulf by air services from Trivandrum.

The flow of money from the Gulf had made almost everything very expensive in Kerala, particularly real estate. On an average the going rate for an acre of land even in relatively unimportant places is over Rs 1 lakh. Now the price of land has begun to come down. Many people had earned a fortune by selling their land at fancy prices. Now they are the luckiest of the lot. The construction of buildings has slowed down to a halt in many parts of Kerala because of uncertain conditions. Many who had paid advances for purchasing land are now in difficulty as they have to fulfil the contract by paying the stipulated amount, while the actual price has started coming down.

G. S. KARTHA, Trivandrum

Sights on SIET once more

The reputation of the college is at stake

ON August 6 last year, the students, teachers and non-teaching staff of the SIET women's college in Madras joined hands and gave the college management a deadline (August 10) to settle their long-standing demands. The college management reacted with alacrity and closed

the institution. The agitation went on for twelve days before Basheer Ahmed, the principal of SIET college, had to compromise. A protracted meeting between the representatives of the aggrieved parties, the college management, the Vice-Chancellor of Madras University and representativ-



SIET students holding classes on the pavements

es of the State Government culminated in an accord.

Granted among other things were: UGC scales of pay, franchise to students to elect their own representatives, confirmation of all employees who had completed two years of service, regularisation of service conditions for non-teaching staff, removal of dress regulations for students and finally, withdrawal of the dismissal order served on Mr S. M. Pasha, one of the leaders of the struggle.

However, the chapter was not closed. On February 7 this year, the management once again shut down the college. According to the closure notice issued in various newspapers

by Ms Fathima Akhtar, correspondent, the lockout was necessitated following "violent acts in the college by a certain section of students, teachers and a majority of the non-teaching staff". It is common knowledge though, that the so-called acts of violence on the campus were actually stage-managed. By doing so, the college management hoped to sidetrack the issues involved in the renewed agitation by the staff, students and non-teaching staff demanding implementation of the agreement reached last August.

The suspension and subsequent dismissal of Mr Pasha, president of the non-teaching staff union of SIET College was a clear case of victimisa-

tion. Twelve other employees were suspended after they staged a hunger strike in front of the principal's office demanding his reinstatement. In addition the college teaching staff has not been paid its arrears (since the agreement had a retrospective effect clause). It seems that the college management hopes to whip up public sympathy by closing down just when the university examinations are around the corner. With money posing no problem, the college has released advertisements in the local Press which give the management's reasons for the closure.

Parents of the 3,000 odd students of the college have been advised to "collect the certificates of their wards to facilitate their joining other colleges" so that they (the students) can appear for the University exams elsewhere. What is conveniently ignored is the fact that at the fag end of the academic year it is downright impossible to find admission in other colleges that are already overcrowded. The teachers of SIET were quick to react and agreed to hold classes for students of the college at any alternative venue. At the time of writing the talks between the agitators and the management were deadlocked because of the latter's adamant attitude. "We shall not give in to arm-twisting and blatant blackmail", a spokesman of the Association of University Teachers told SUNDAY. The teachers finally decided on March 5 to hold classes in makeshift sheds on the pavement outside the college. One notable achievement was that about 1,500 students arrived for the classes.

On a larger level, the protracted struggle on the SIET College campus is only symptomatic of the maladministration of many private colleges in Tamil Nadu

ASHOK KAMATH, Madras

Publishers hold their breath

Supplies to libraries are suffering

THE situation, to say the least, is grim. Consider the facts: India is the third largest producer of English books in the world. In addition, India is the seventh largest producer of books in any language. Despite all this, Indian publishing runs the risk of losing its major foothold: supplies to libraries. College and university libraries have not been able to buy books from major Indian publishing houses this year because of an unfortunate denial of funds from the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The Seventies were heady days for Indian publishing. Even before the post-Emergency book boom, publishing made rapid progress, according to Mr Narendra Kumar of Vikas. Book fairs have helped, of course and, thanks to the National Book Trust, (NBT) many deals involving the

translation of Indian books by foreign publishers have been made possible through such fairs. Such an arrangement also serves to give our authors the international prestige they deserve. India's is already the most developed publishing industry in the Third World. Indian publishers have successfully broken the British and American publishing stranglehold on African nations, a fact proved by our enormous success at book fairs there. NBT's confident chairman Mr A. L. Dias remarked:

"Ironically, just when publishers were making rapid strides in world markets, a terrible thing happened: the bombshell of drastic cuts in grants to college and university libraries".

The usual arrangement between universities and publishers is that the

latter supplies an earmarked stock of books each year, and these books are paid for from UGC grants later. This year, most publishers have not received payment for the previous year's supplies, that is those made for 1978-79. The reason is that UGC grants were not made. In fact, the UGC's denial of grants for the period 1979-80 has led to a distressing chain reaction which, in the final round, affects the authors and students. Since the universities could not pay for the books taken the previous year, they chose not to order any for this year, leaving the publishers stranded and wandering what to do with their piles of manuscripts. "Even manuscripts that we accepted have had to be returned," Mr Kumar said. The worst sufferers in such a situation were not only the college book banks—which collect several copies of a single book to loan out to poor students—but also authors, and ultimately, as Mr Kumar says, "intellect" suffers too.

As if this were not enough, publishers allege that corrupt librarians are making things even worse by striking secret deals with publishers of their choice, in exchange for handsome bribes. Though they are wary of pointing to specific instances, publishers insist that corruption is nothing new. It has existed, they say wherever libraries have sprung up. A further hindrance is the overwhelming choice of foreign books in preference to Indian books. "Our authors are as good as the best in the world," Mr Arvind Kumar of Radhakrishna—who are largely Hindi publishers—said. "Then why does *The Aamur* sell more than any Hindi novel? He was asked. But that was another matter.

The effect on publishers of the cut in grants has been for them to curtail their own budgets. "Further curtailment is now planned. Things will come to a standstill by the summer of 1980," according to Mr Narendra Kumar, quoting a recent centrepiece article in the *Times of India*. Explaining the reason behind the sudden cuts in grants, Mr Kumar said there had been, of late, a shift in emphasis from higher education to adult education. More grants were planned for primary and adult education than higher education. Mr Arvind Kumar gave another reason: "Our former Education Minister did not trust Indian books. He thought the books that libraries bought were all just trash."

Realising the gravity of the situation, the Planning Commission chose

to make an ad hoc grant to the UGC of about Rs two or three crores this year to set up book cooperatives in colleges to buy the books directly from the publishers. This would bypass the commission (roughly 40 per cent) to booksellers or distributors, which earlier took its toll on the price. The colleges would thus get books cheaper. The former Education Member in the Planning Commission, Mr J. D. Sethi, had written to the UGC chairman, Professor Satish Chandra, to this effect, sometime around September last year, but there was no reply. Mr Sethi considered the silence to be deliberate. The proposals for the grant had been made to the Education Ministry, which later conveyed the offer to the UGC. The UGC was asked to draw up its plan, and show the Government how it could utilise the ad hoc grant purposefully. After that was done, the grant would be made. The Planning Commission had also laid down a condition that the books to be bought with the money should only be Indian books. "I would not give them money to buy foreign books," Mr Sethi said. The UGC is said to have objected on grounds of autonomy, and argued that the Government could not interfere in its functioning.

Arguing that the UGC lacked imagination, and was nothing more than an organisation of calculators, busy working out how much each college and university should get out of its funds, Mr Sethi said: "So long as the present predicament of the UGC continues, higher education and

libraries will remain faced with crises. Today the UGC is in no position to reform higher education in any meaningful sense. It is not the shortage of funds that is creating a crisis, but mismanagement of the UGC. The problem of a crisis in publishing is part of the problem of higher education."

What does Mr Satish Chandra have to say? "He's too busy now to deal with such things," Mr Chandra's worried secretary told this reporter after showing the chairman a questionnaire that asked for his comments on why the Planning Commission grant was not accepted. Another top UGC official however confided: "We make grants for libraries on two bases: the recommendation of visiting teams to colleges, and plan assessments. The decisions take time. In the beginning of each plan year we give basic grants to universities. For the year ending 31 March, 1979 we were not able to honour our commitments to universities, because we were short of funds. Last year we were given about Rs five crores, and the year before, about Rs three and a half crores. This year it came down to about Rs two crores". Asked about the ad hoc grant proposal, he replied: "We have no information about it. We also do not know anything about the controversy over autonomy. We have written to state Governments to give money to non-central universities because we have no money".

NIRMAL MITRA, Delhi

DEATH ON THE HIGHWAY



Aloke Mitra

A Calcutta State Transport Corporation bus met with an accident on March 5 near Nadia on National Highway 34 about 70 kms from Calcutta. The accident happened when the vehicle crashed into a tree. The number of deaths rose to 41 and the condition of two of the six admitted in a Calcutta hospital was "very serious".

LIVING

Carnal Carnival



Not so long ago, an ecstatic travel writer of *Playboy* wrote, "See Naples and die, but first see Carnival". He was flying from Brazil where all around him, frazzled funsters were tottering back to reality after the three-day Carnival. For three days — and what is more, three nights — wives had parted with their husbands and virgins with virginity. However, notes Mario Cabral e Sa, Carnival in Goa is a tamer affair, although by Indian standards it is wild enough. Just skin deep, he adds, but even then it is often the first chapter in the story of many a shotgun wedding. The timing for Carnival certainly couldn't have been better. When Carnival ends, Lent begins; when Lent ends, the Goan wedding season begins.

It is in essence a spring festival, a three-day prelude of licence to the forty-day Lenten season of abstinence and penance. Almost logically, true to its etymological roots, Carnival became predominantly carnal and no one ever made any bones about it. Carnival symbolises the freedom to do what one would normally never think of doing; like when the village slut masqueraded as the local school's dour mother superior. Basically, a mood, Carnival was never a festival made to order. Un-

til, that is, the Tourism machinery straitjacketed it. This year, the Department of Tourism converted what was traditionally a dimlit — for a reason — street dance into a set for a Bombay film-maker so that he could shoot some impromptu scenes for one of his forthcoming ventures. All of Goa looks back with nostalgia on the good old days when a bottle of Scotch — and a

large one at that — used to cost only a rupee and a half, and when champagne used to go for eight rupees a bottle. Carnival then was what it should be: a sudden, almost desperate surge of happiness; during which everyone's yesterdays would be forgotten, tomorrows cancelled and the spirituality of the boisterous present divinely glorified. To sin then was such a virtue.



Silent no longer

The Silent Valley debate has been raging for months. The Government has proposed the setting up of a hydro-electric project in the Valley, but there are several voices being raised in protest. The reason is not very hard to find: it is simply that the Valley area contains some unique species of plants and wildlife which now face possible extinction. The battle has been a protracted one, but now there is one notable addition to the "Save Silent Valley" project. The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources has stepped in to swell the ranks of the anti-hydel power project. One cannot help but wonder just when the struggle is going to end.

Festive juror

The Cannes Film Festival is without a doubt, the most famous in the world, for reasons other than just the obvious. Apart from the fact that you can rub shoulders with all the really big names of the film world, you also stand a fairly good chance of seeing a great deal of local colour. Perhaps the most interesting part of the festival is the off-screen activity. Everyone, but everyone knows that you see a lot of flesh at Cannes: the atmosphere is just not complete without it. Wander on to the beaches and it's there to behold, in all its glory.

The Cracow festival on the other hand, is more staid, but as far as documentary festivals go, it is one of the most prestigious in the world, along with the Leipzig and Oberhausen Festivals. To be asked to join the international jury at any of these festivals is recognition of a high order. To Amita Malik, film critic and telecaster, goes the honour of having been included on the jury of this year's festival from June 3 to June 8.

Who was that again?



Recognise the lady with the ghara on her head and a broad smile on her face? The photograph is slightly blurred but the features, we are sure, are still distinguishable. If your first guess is wrong, count to ten and try again.

You won't need another try. The Prime Minister was in high spirits some time ago, when she was introduced to a troupe of folk dancers from Andhra Pradesh. The dancers too, were all smiles when she took an active part.

Many a slip ...



The Complete Family News paper

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The masthead of the new paper

Amid a great deal of fanfare and heraldry, Madras's new evening paper was launched on February 27. The *Indian Sun* was greeted with a lot of enthusiasm simply because, reports Ashok Kamath, the only other evening paper in that city, *The Mail*, is losing ground with readers. For some time now, the citizens of Madras have been looking out for an English evening paper with a lot of local flavour. This was because little effort was made to concentrate on local news in *The Mail*. The new paper, the *Indian*

Sun, is being published by the Dinakaran group of newspapers; the group that publishes two dailies, *Dinakaran* and *Daily Thanthi*, along with another evening paper, *Malai Murasu*. However, it seems that the new evening paper is having its teething problems: there is a generous sprinkling of howlers in various forms. For example: in the inaugural issue there is a message from the star Sivaji Ganesan. We presume he did not say "I wholeheartedly welcome this attempt to start an English daily..."

Sex in the sunshine

If sex today is a dirty word then we have only ourselves to blame, in the opinion of noted neurosurgeon Ajit C. Phadke. Dr Phadke was speaking at the second national conference on Human Sexuality and Sexual Disfunctions in Bombay. He thinks that many of the sexual miseries prevalent today are caused by so-called "civilised" men, who have wrenched sex out of its natural biosociological context. Food for thought, that.

Dr Phadke was emphatic when he stated that sex is currently treated as an evil. Ignorance on the subject of sex, he said, could only be

ascribed to an attempt to perpetuate the name of sexual purity. Morality, he adds, has suffered no end, and the very term itself has been taken out of context to serve varied purposes. A rational sex education should never be looked at askance because such instruction could help eradicate many of the old wives' tales about the so-called evils of sex. The superstitions related to sex, he emphasised, were the cause of psychosomatic sexual disfunctions. He closed with an earnest plea to bring sex out into the "open sunshine". Taken literally, we bet there would be plenty to support that motion.

Dilip Bradman



Of Dilip Doshi's spin capabilities, there can be no doubt whatsoever. Of his determination to succeed with the bat, there should be even less doubt. When he made his Test debut at Madras against Kim Hughes' Australians, the crowd thought it was a great joke when he came in to bat. Since then, however, cricket crowds at Test centres throughout the country have ceased to laugh when Doshi walks out to the crease, his blue helmet atop his head, his bat tucked under his arm, and his jaw thrust out in determination.

Against the Pakistanis at Bombay, after the frontline batsmen had collapsed for meagre scores, Doshi had chipped in with 9 runs: not very great statistically but invaluable in terms of time spent at the crease. And considering that the Indian openers had contributed nine runs between them,

Doshi's effort was precious. Then came Kanpur, when the Indian batsmen once again succumbed to the wiles of the wiry Sikander Bakht, and it looked as if the first innings would yield less than 100 runs. Ghavri, and to some extent Roger Binny held off the opponents, but it was Dilip Doshi who stole the hearts of the crowd when he added 20 runs in quick time. Then came Madras. Remember how he square cut a hostile Imran Khan for four and leaned casually on his bat as if it was just something he did every day?

It was a more elegant Doshi we saw at the Telarama Single Wicket Tournament, cover driving with aplomb. And now the valiant spin bowler's latest feat: a belligerent 45 for his club, Sporting Union, in the Calcutta First Division League. Move over, all you all-rounders, here comes Dilip.

THE WORLD

The end of the road



Bishop Abel Muzorewa

Whatever else Bishop Abel Muzorewa might have said about the future of Rhodesia's independence, he was finished. The one who now has the power in his hands is the militant leader, Robert Mugabe, who won the Rhodesian elections with a thumping majority. This left-wing radical guerilla leader won 57 of the 80 seats reserved for blacks in the first 100-member Zimbabwe Parliament. His former ally, Joshua Nkomo, won

20 seats. Although the Patriotic Front of which both Nkomo and Mugabe were members broke down before the polls, Robert Mugabe declared that the victory was the Front's victory. And Nkomo reaffirmed: "What everyone must do is accept these results...they give us one result—the independence of Zimbabwe". But the Bishop has failed to accept the verdict of the people. He said that the polls were "unfree and unfair". The whites under Mr Ian Smith are holding their breath for the moment since there seems to be a hold up in the operations of the guerilla forces of Mugabe and Nkomo who cooperated with each other in the "seven-year bush war". The respective commanders have asked their men to stay put and the new premier, Robert Mugabe, has requested British commander of the cease-fire force, John Acland, to supply military instructors to help fuse the armies into a united nationalist force. The Bishop is checkmated, Mr Mugabe.

Major General Hara Kiri

Almost all nations have often been troubled with spy scares and Japan is no exception. Only there is a difference in the way the Japanese do their spying. In January 1980, Major-General Yukihisa Miyanaga was caught in Tokyo passing military secrets to the Russians by wireless. The Major-General was perhaps displaying his honesty when the police came to arrest him. They found a taped cassette with the broadcasting orders, a diary in

which the dates, timings and frequencies for receiving Soviet instructions were recorded and codes, among other incriminating evidence.

Will his punishment be lessened for his honesty when he is sent for trial on March 17? He will probably get away with a jail sentence for a year since the Japanese have no legal means of prosecuting those passing official secrets. Simply because they have no official secrets act.

Mark my word

Mark Thatcher, the 26-year-old motor racer son of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher recently caused a minor flutter. His mother was very relieved when he announced a change of sponsors: he has got rid of his earlier sponsors — Durex, the men's contraceptive producing concern, and Men Only, the girlie magazine. He is now being sponsored by Wendy

Wools and Morris Vulcan Toys.

Mr Thatcher will drive with a £ 40,000 team to gain greater experience. The managing director of Brands Hatch Racing, Mr John Webb, has his reservations although they are providing the cars. He said that Mr Thatcher would never be the world champion but had the potential to win races.

All work and no Playboy

The US Navy High Command was in an uproar. And with good reason, perhaps. How would you like it if your employees posed for *Playboy*? Two women who face possibly retribution are Lisa Ann Woolf and Susan Gage, both of whom posed nude for the April issue of the famous magazine. The offending feature was on women in the armed forces but both girls seem to be getting off rather lightly as neither has been formally charged. Both of them are however being investigated for possible violation of military codes. Lisa Ann Woolf, 21, is a machinist abroad the USN destroyer Samuel Gompers, while Susan Gage is an electrician. Most intriguing of all, it has not been specified whether the women posed with their epaulettes on or off.

And as if that was not enough, the Navy soon had another problem on its plate. Petty Officer, 3rd Class Jeffrey Bandy III, performed



Lisa Ann Woolf

an uninhibited — and warmly applauded — striptease at a place called Harlow's Disco close to his base at Moffatt Field, California. The Navy is dithering about what to do to him and higher-ups are considering one of three things — disciplinary hearing, a court martial or a discharge for Bandy. The accused had the last word, though. "I want the discharge," he said.

Wool over Carter's eyes

Pure Australian wool is somehow finding its way into Russia: the produce of Australian Prime Minister, Mr Malcolm Fraser's country property in Victoria. When a consignment of wool marked Nareen, which is the name of Mr Fraser's

Malcolm Fraser



property, was found in Melbourne harbour it raised quite a storm in the country. To defend himself perhaps, the PM said he had nothing to do with the wool sales to the Soviet Union and that it had been sold to the Russians at an auction before the invasion of Afghanistan.

The Opposition pounced upon him saying that he should stop being "hypocritical". Earlier, he had stated the Government's proposal of boycotting the Moscow Olympic Games in keeping with Mr Carter's desires. The Opposition said that the PM himself was continuing sales to Russia while the Australian Olympic athletes have been made the scapegoats. Initially, the Australian public had supported Fraser's boycott move. Now they don't. In fact, according to a recent opinion poll, about 70 per cent are against it. Perhaps, the PM's vision has been clouded. Or should we say it is woolly.

Genius by choice



Robert Graham

Is the Orwellian 1984 far away? Mathematically, only four years away. But to 74-year-old California businessman, Mr Robert K. Graham, George Orwell's time schedule was too far away. He is believed to have organised an exclusive non-commercial sperm bank, which could pave the way for children with super intelligence. The donors are Nobel Prize winners and the recipients are women with high IQs whose husbands are sterile. Mr Graham is a successful businessman and previously made pots of money by pioneering plastic spectacle lenses. His idea of the sperm bank was not exactly a brainwave but the idea of,

believe it or not, another Nobel Prize winner—Dr Hermann Muller, a genetist who won the award in 1946. Dr Muller was concerned about the "declining human genetic pool and advised the formation of a sperm bank funded by intelligent men. It is believed that five Nobel Prize winners have till now donated their reproductive seeds but only one name has been confirmed. He is the 1956 Nobel Prize winner for Physics, Dr William Shockley.

Mr Graham's bank is called the Repository for Germinal Choice. He does not pay for the sperm donations nor do the women pay him for his services. They do, however, have to meet certain specifications with regard to health and intelligence. They have to fill out questionnaires prepared by a number of people and only the best are selected. To them goes the choice of Nobel Prize winners. The prize winners also have to fill in a form stating whether their offspring have been normal or not. Only three women have so far been selected by Mr Graham and they are believed to be members of Mensa, the society for people of high intelligence.

A franc necessity

It is oval in shape, nearly 10 ft long and 3 ft wide built of corrugated concrete and has marble-finished walls. It is one of the space age "super loos"—a recent acquisition of that cosmopolitan haute couture — Paris. Its cost is between 100,000 and 200,000 francs and the company producing them wants to rent them at 40,000 francs a year. These "chalets of necessity" as they are called have been a hit with the people. There have been unending queues from six in the morning since February 21, 1980, when they started functioning. The fact that the super loos — there are two of them — have been built near the much-visited Pompidou Centre which is the National Museum of Modern Art does not detract from their.

What does a Parisian get for the one franc entry fee he pays to get in to the special 'urinoirs'? As the round stainless steel door

opens he gets an earful of soft music. He also gets to smell some disinfectant. Along with cleanliness and freshness there is central heating and water. As soon as the "chalet" is vacated it is cleaned automatically for one minute. Only then can anyone else enter. And the gallant Parisians do not discriminate about who uses it — men or women. The 'urinoirs' are unisex.

Thou shalt marry—maybe

Edward Berry 61, and Doris Eileen Ward 57, are on the verge of creating legal history in Britain. The House of Lords has given the two leave to introduce the Edward Berry and Doris Eileen Ward Bill for a Royal Assent to get married. Edward Berry wishes to marry Doris Ward. "We decided we would like to get mar-

ried only about nine months ago. It seemed a straightforward matter," said Mr Berry. Well it was not that simple since they were related. However, he had a justification since they were not blood relations. Mr Berry had married Mrs Ward's widowed mother and had taken the responsibility of her younger children but not Doris Eileen Ward.

My kingdom for an aspirin



Fidel Castro

That great revolutionary leader of Cuba, Dr Fidel Castro, is in a dilemma. Should he continue to engage his forces in Ethiopia and Angola or should he call them back? And it is all due to pigs. There has been a severe outbreak of "hog cholera" in many areas of Cuba leaving the pig population severely depleted. The epidemic has probably been brought by Cuban soldiers returning from their African engagements. That the epidemic has acquired gigantic proportions is evident from the fact that the entire pig population of one province,

Guantanamo, was eradicated by the civil and military authorities. This in turn, led to a severe meat shortage in the country. With the failure of the sugarcane and tobacco crops due to blight the economic prospects in Cuba do not look too bright. However, Cuba does not have to worry since it will be helped out by Comecon aid. Meanwhile, the African origins of the disease are being hushed up and the propaganda machinery is spreading the news that the Haitian refugees in Cuba are responsible. Incidentally, only 2,800 refugees came from Haiti in 1979!

They do not have the new fangled permissive ideas of living together and they wish to do so only after they are united in holy matrimony. If the Edward Berry and Doris Eileen Ward (Marriage Enabling) Bill is passed, it will be a major triumph against the Table of Kindred and Affinity which states that a man may not marry his daughter. The Bill will also set aside the Book of Leviticus and contemporary moral laws.

JUST when everyone heaved a sigh of relief, saying that *Parveen Babi* was back, they better hold their breath once again. There is a strong rumour that Parveen has returned only to complete a few films and that she is no longer as enthusiastic about her acting career as she was before.

YOUNG director *Rahul Rawat* of RK unit who was *Raj Kapoor's* assistant during *Bobby* decided to drop *Parveen Babi* and approach *Zeena Aman*. Not only was Zeena asked to complete the film within record time but being an earlier RK star, she was expected to cooperate in other ways too. But Zeena was unable to give suitable dates and eventually Parveen's loss and Zeena's misfortune turned out to be *Poonam Dhulon's* gain. She has been signed to play opposite *Dabboo* and what a great pair they are going to make. With *Red Rose* a film which stars Poonam and *Rajesh Khanna*, being billed by trade sharks as a pure money-spinner, Poonam is the next star-girl to watch. And *Tina Munni* please watch out!

THE latest fad among Bombay stars is to name houses after film person-

alities who are no more. About two months ago, that landmark in Bandra called Perry Cross, was renamed after *Nanda's* father, Master Vinayak. Nanda's bungalow happens to be on the same road. Now a junction of Breach Candy has been renamed after the late singer *Mukesh*. To be sure both the renaming functions were typical film events, with crowds, flowers.

WITH the fast approach- ing exit of *Vinod Khanna*, and *Amritabh Bachchan's* charisma growing stale and *Shashi* approaching his 200th film and the uncertainty of the return to glory of ex-superstar *Rajesh Khanna*, the path seems open for one actor who is surely going to strike gold and make a big noise about it too — *Shatrughan Sinha*. His films lined up for release are likely to back this prediction and then we won't hear the end of it! *Shatru* will soon stand up and start speaking!

DEPAK PARASHER admits that his sensitive nature would almost make him a misfit if he were not good at his work, good-looking and lucky. He says there is one thing he can never see himself doing — going to a party without a proper invitation. He'll never go if he has been just told to *aa jao*! Like the

Shatrughan Sinha : inching towards resurrection



Poonam Dhillon : smiling back coyly at lady luck



recent *Chintu-Neeu* wedding for which not many invitation cards were sent and everyone was expected to gate-crash. When Chintu met Deepak at a party just before the wedding, he had told him to *aa jao*. The new boy told him plainly: "If you send me an invitation, I'll surely come." The next day, Chintu's younger brother came with an invitation card and a personal message from the RK family. Otherwise, this was one new star who would not have gone to the big wedding!

NOT long ago, an American journalist interviewing MGR had the "temerity" to ask the matinee idol why he didn't try acting in a natural way. Silence fell in the room only to be broken by MGR's barbed retort: "Name one American actor who's acting in a natural way". The interviewer hesitated for a couple of seconds and then said: "Maybe Brando". "Brando? Yes, Brando is such a great actor but how can he, the great actor, act in an immoral film like *Last Tango in Paris*?" shot back our moralist hero.

And now a veteran actor whom sycophants used to call the "Indian Brando" doesn't want the epithet to be continued. It seems one of his sidekicks read out to him a scathing piece on how the world's most expensive actor (who collected Rs 16 crores for his

cleavage-displaying spree. The climax of this stripping spree was evident in the recent Tamil film *Jambho*. Even then the box-office remained cold. Which reminds one of the desperate attempts by another Kannada actress, Rekha Rao, to excite the male audiences in *Prema Kama*. Male audiences have proved to be tricky for both Jayamala and Rekha Rao.

FOR some reasons this columnist couldn't see director Durai's successful slum-drama *Pasi*. And when I happened to see it recently, Madras was agog with rumours involving heroine Shoba and her "uncle" Balu Mahendra. There's a scene in the film showing Shoba's mother committing suicide when she (the mother) realises that the daughter has made "it" with a truck driver.

of rude things to say about Shoba and Balu.

THEY say Jayamala's one secret ambition is to act as a goddess. With a face like a her's, which has the word vamp stamped all over it, no producer will have the courage to feature her as a goddess in a religious or devotional film. But she continues to be the hot favourite of Telugu producers who make soft porno devotionals like *Mahasakthi*. The role of the temptress invariably goes to Jayamala, and she continues to be the favourite of V. Vittalacharya. She's featured in a plum role in his new venture *Madana Manjari*.

NOW that the much publicised *Zabardast* is shelved, actress Sarada's singular ambition of making an impact on Hindi

audiences has vanished for good. She was to play an important role opposite Dilip Kumar in *Zabardast*. Another Hindi film of her's that was shelved some time ago was *Aparajita* in which she was cast with Amitabh and Shatrughan Sinha.

DESPITE the demands of politics, both MGR and Karunanidhi are devoting a few hours every day for their screen work. The former is poring over scripts and studying pictures of young girls who'll play second lead to Latha. And Karunanidhi is busy spawning stories and scripts. Said a DMK Party member: "MGR is desperate to finish a film or two before the elections as he thinks he'll once again become the Chief Minister."

PIOUSJI

Rathi Devi



Actor Rajnikanth

role in *Superman*) subjects his guests to numerous acts of sadism. According to the report the guests are sprayed with bull manure when Brando feels that they are talking pure nonsense and the guests are kept awake late into the night when Brando transmits his own gospel truth over his private transmitter.

KANNADA actress Jayamala started off rather well by playing the second lead in a few Rajkumar films but when her career refused to reach anywhere near giddy heights, she went on a

"Maybe she wouldn't have minded it if it was a film-director", shouted some one inside the cinema hall. And there was spontaneous laughter. The scenes showing Shoba pregnant also invited some rude comments. Well, all this may appear rather amusing, but this columnist wonders why our masses who practise double-standards and hypocrisy should take such perverse delight in the love affairs of screen celebrities.

And what's really galling is that a number of screen-couples too who have been "living in sin" have plenty

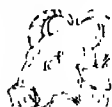


Beginning March 16

This week the Sun alone is in Pisces, Venus is in Aries, Mars, Jupiter and Rahu are in Leo, Saturn is in Virgo, Neptune and Uranus are in Scorpio and Mercury and Ketu are conjoined in Aquarius. The Moon will be moving through Pisces and Aries from Aquarius.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Attend to your health. The health of elders in the family may also pose a problem. You need a lot of rest to recuperate mentally and physically. Errors of judgement may lead to adverse circumstances. Expected and unexpected benefits may accrue through elderly female relatives during the middle of the week. This period is unfavourable for courtship and travel. **Good dates:** 18, 20, 21 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 7, 2 and 4. **Favourable direction:** West.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) A new love affair may culminate in marriage. You will also make new friends; some of them from the opposite sex. A very pleasant surprise awaits you around the middle of this week. Seek and act upon the advice of elders and family friends. Businessmen should enter into new contracts and trade agreements. Do not be extravagant. **Good dates:** 17, 18, 20 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 5, 3 and 1. **Favourable direction:** East.



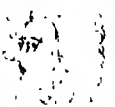
GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) An exceedingly successful, happy and eventful week is predicted for you. All your ventures will prosper. Utilise all the splendid opportunities which will come your way. For sportsmen this will be a very lucky week. Children and intellectuals will prove helpful. Court, merry, make changes and travel if necessary. **Good dates:** 17, 19 and 20. **Lucky numbers:** 10, 1 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.



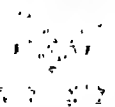
CANCER (June 22 — July 22) A sense of well-being and contentment will prevail despite some financial problems. Your business associates may give you cause for worry and annoyance. But in spite of these hurdles, a happy and successful week is forecast. People in the armed forces will prove helpful. Exercise care and discretion in correspondence and dealings with friends. **Good dates:** 16, 19, 20 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 9, 10 and 11. **Favourable direction:** North.



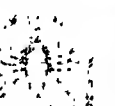
LEO (July 23 — August 22) This week will provide a fair measure of good fortune, but disappointment in love is predicted. The domestic front may prove troublesome. Safeguard your own health. Your own industry and initiative will be rewarded, but endeavour to avoid misunderstandings especially with business partners. New friends will contribute to your happiness. **Good dates:** 18, 19, 20 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 7 and 4. **Favourable direction:** West.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Children will bring a lot of happiness. Your health will show great improvement. Employers and elders will prove exceedingly helpful. Make hay while the sun shines. Translate plans into action. Do not hesitate to adopt novel business methods. This week is ideal for finalising auspicious arrangements. You must exploit the beneficial stellar influences. **Good dates:** 18, 20, 21 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 1 and 10. **Favourable directions:** North.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) An auspicious week is predicted for you. Successful business deals, gain through elders, beneficial changes and travel are forecast. Sportsmen and artists will win laurels. Be careful not to arouse the hostility of your employers or those in authority. The domestic front will remain a source of joy and happiness. Do not be extravagant. **Good dates:** 16, 17, 18 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 9 and 11. **Favourable direction:** South-west.



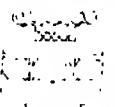
SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) If you can avoid excesses and heavy expenditure on friends, this week will produce a measure of good fortune. Some people will be promoted. Others may be transferred. Concentrate on business expansion and diversification. You are advised to exercise extreme caution in love and romance. Domestic and social affairs also require your attention. **Good dates:** 17, 19 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 6 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) This will be a week of mixed fortunes. Exercise wit and discretion in all spheres. Romantic new friendships are indicated but beware of deception. Avoid erratic changes. A modicum of success and happiness is predicted. Check extravagant tendencies. **Good dates:** 17, 18, 21 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** East.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) Good fortune will benefit you in many ways. Those in authority will prove very helpful and cooperative. Promotion and change of residence are likely. Watch your finances very carefully. Do not let your heart override prudence and common sense. Children and intellectuals will prove helpful. This week is excellent for courtship, marriage and other domestic engagements. **Good dates:** 16, 17, 18 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 6, 3 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.

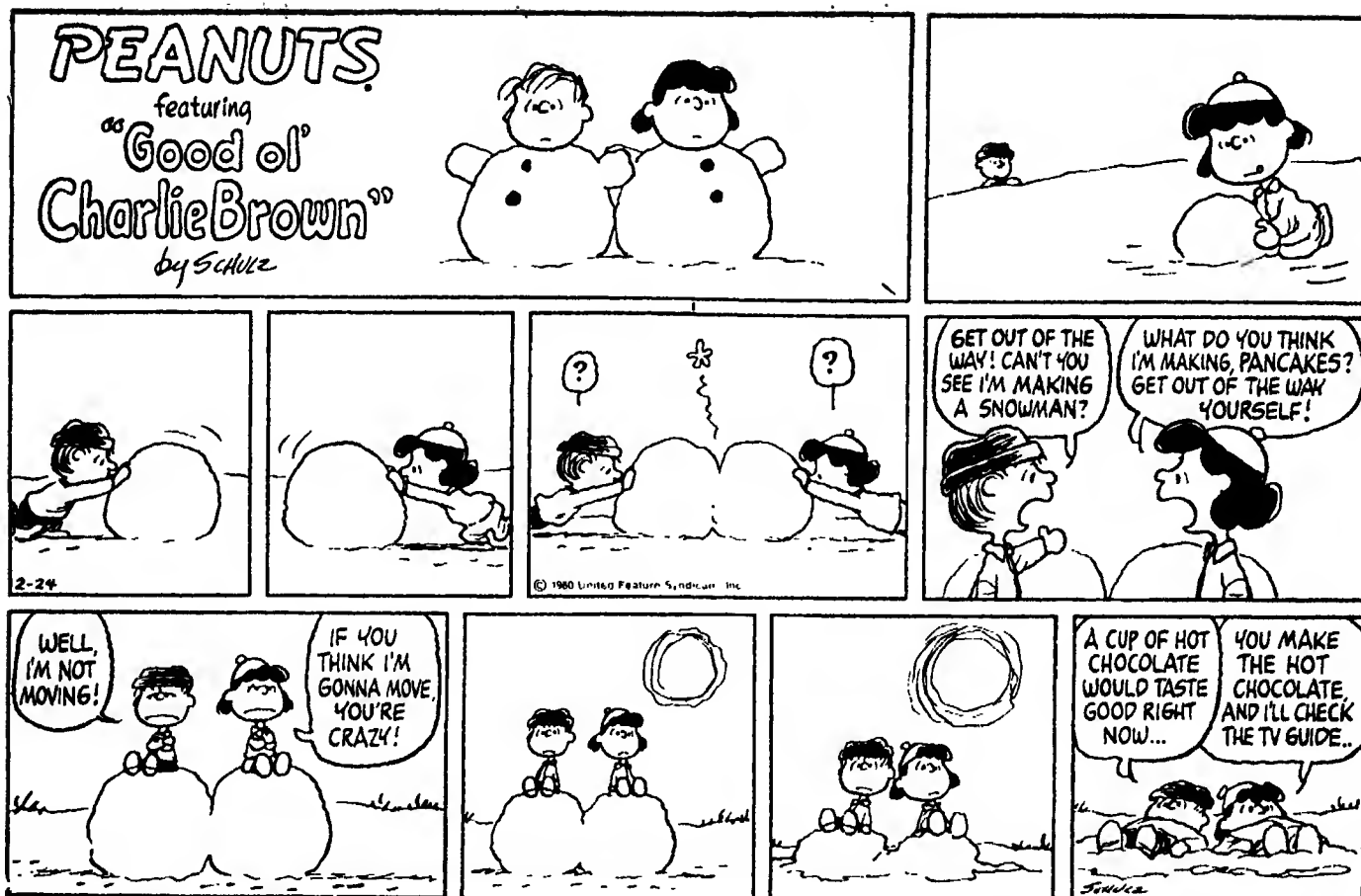


AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) Expedite everything related to business, law, property and inheritance. Refrain from annoying those in authority. Also refrain from making impulsive changes. Exercise caution in all your dealings. Deal tactfully with your business associates. Safeguard your own health and that of family members. Concentrate on intellectual activities. You are advised not to lend or borrow money. **Good dates:** 17, 19, 20 and 21. **Lucky numbers:** 7, 8 and 11. **Favourable directions:** East and North.



PISCES (February 20 — March 20) This week will be difficult and trying. Keep away from quarrels and controversies. The health of womenfolk in the family may give you cause for worry. Those in authority will prove helpful. Avoid extravagant tendencies. Letters will bring good news. **Good dates:** 19, 20 and 22. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 10 and 3. **Favourable direction:** South.

M. B. RAMAN



VARIETY science

Sweet fuel

THE constantly rising oil prices and oil's limited reserves emphasise the need to develop new sources of energy. In tropical countries one important source, it is now becoming clear, could be alcohol. This can be mixed with petrol or diesel fuel to power cars and trucks, and it forms a good starting point—feedstock—for many industrial synthetic processes. Two countries, Brazil and Pakistan, for example, have already embarked on ambitious programmes to produce alcohol from sugar. But new production techniques based on industrial microbiology, which was developed for making antibiotics, are required before alcohol can become a realistic substitute for oil as a source of energy over large areas of the world.

Why is sugar the best raw material? First, there is the fact that agricultural crops—including those from which alcohol is made by fermentation—are getting steadily cheaper in real terms. There is, for instance, a world surplus of sugar—and sugar-cane is the best choice for processing into alcohol. There is also a need for new rural-based industries in tropical countries to arrest the drift to the cities; alcohol plants could be just what is needed. The old idea was to

produce alcohol from agricultural wastes. But the quantities required for serious energy production are so vast that wastes alone are insufficient. Full-scale primary crops are needed. Sugar cane is best because it not only provides plenty of sugar to ferment but also provides plenty of leftover fibrous material, bagasse. Bagasse can be burned to provide the heat required for distilling the alcohol and for other factory purposes. Other crops which either are being, or could be, used to provide alcohol include cassava, sorghum, maize and sugar beet. Crops like these, with high sugar contents, are cheap to grow in the tropics.

But there are constraints. The fermentation process has to be brought up to date before the alcohol industry can expand. The new techniques which Tate and Lyle, a British sugar refining concern, is now building into its pilot plant include continuous production. To produce alcohol from sugar yeasts are used. This makes for greater efficiency. Another technique is the retention of the yeast cells which do the fermentation, so that they are not lost after a batch has been distilled. The rate at which yeast cells grow and multiply can be increased a hundred times, with consequently greater alcohol productivity. New uses are also being found for

waste products left over when the sugar has been made into alcohol. Economic studies show clearly that unless such uses can be identified it will be difficult to make alcohol production economic in many rural areas.

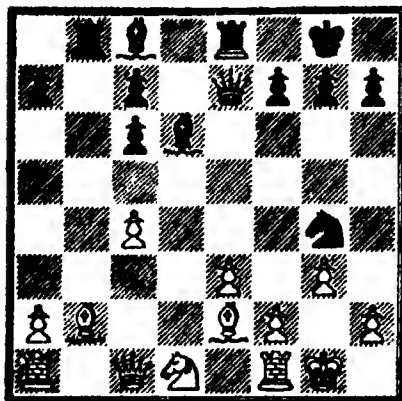
Strains of yeast are being developed which can live and work in high concentrations of alcohol. This means that far less water has to be evaporated off when the alcohol is distilled, thus cutting the fuel bill. Instead of being burned, the waste bagasse can be used for other purposes, such as building material. Yeasts use only the sugar in plants to make alcohol, leaving the hard cellulose cell walls behind. Now work is in process to breed bacteria which can make alcohol from cellulose on an industrial scale. If this is successful the bacteria might be mixed with yeasts to make the alcohol recovery process more efficient.

Although alcohol is unlikely to become a major source of energy in industrialised, temperate countries like Britain, Tate and Lyle and other concerns have identified another likely means whereby these countries might obtain a growing proportion of their energy needs from agricultural and other wastes. This is a process called pyrolysis — destructive distillation.

JOHN NEWELL

chess

Karpov (Black) to move



Timman (White)

Position after White's 15th move

Double trouble

Game of the month is taken from the Montreal tournament and shows World Champion Anatoly Karpov at his very best. For me the most interesting aspect of this game is that it illustrates a very unusual quality of Karpov's style. He is renowned as a positional player of great patience and control who generally steers clear of complications and dislikes tactical play based on short term threats. For the most part his play is true to its reputation, but on occasions when he does not trust the long term soundness of his own position he completely turns turtle. His play becomes sharp, tactical and very, very tricky. This reversal often takes his opponent completely by surprise because he is suddenly confronted by the kind of moves he least expects from Karpov. This game is a clear example. Timman comes out of the opening with a small positional advantage, but is quite taken aback by Karpov's unexpected eleventh move, which leaves him completely disorientated and from which he is never allowed to recover.

White: J. Timman Black: A. Karpov
Montreal 1979

English Opening

1. P-QB4, N-KB3; 2. N-QB3, P-K4;
3. N-B3, N-B3; 4. P-K3, B-K2; 4...
B-QN5 is usually played here, but Karpov
evidently feared walking into a prepared
line.

5. P-Q4, P x P; 6. N x P, O-O; 7. N x N,
N x N; 8. B-K2, P-Q4; 9. O-O, B-Q3;
10. P-QN3, Q-K2; 11. B-N2. Of course
not 11. P x P? Q-K4 White has much the
better pawn structure and can look forward
to exerting a lot of pressure on the central
files and diagonals. With his next move
Karpov completely upsets his opponent's
planning.

11... P x P Positionally unplayable, but it
does give Black a variety of tactical chances
against the white king.

12. P x P? underestimating Black's threats,
but he presumably rejected 12. B x P as it
allows Black at least a draw after 12...
N-N5; 13. P-N3 (13. P-KR3? Q-K4!);
N x R; 14. K x N, O-R5; 15. K-N2,
Q-R6+; 16. K-N1, B x P etc.

12... R-N1; Very embarrassing for White.
He must watch out for combinations involving
... R x B and ... Q-K4.

13. Q-B1, N-N5! Shifting his attention to
the other wing. It now 14. P-KR3 Q-K4!
14. P-N3, R-K1; 15. N-Q1 (DIAGRAM)
White's pieces are getting into jumble. Now
Black produces a combination much

deeper than at first sight.

15... N x R!! 16. P-BB! An ingenious
counter-thrust. Instead 16. K x N, Q-R5+;
17. K-N1, B x P!; 18. P x, O x P+; 19.
K-R1, R-K3 is hopeless for White.

16... N x R; 17. P x B, N x N!! The true
point of the combination—18. P x Q, N x B+
and Black emerges with a big material
advantage.

18. P x N, Q x QP; Black has more than
material equality and the attack still per-
sists.

19. K-B2, Q-R3; 20. B-Q4, Q-R7+; 21.
K-K1, Q x P+; 22. K-Q2, Q-N7; 23.
N-N2, B-R3; 24. N-Q3, B x N; The sim-
plest.

25. K x B, R(N1)-Q1; White has no defence
to the murderous threats on the central
files.

26. B-B1, Q-K5+; 27. K-B3, P-QB4!;
28. B x BP, Q-B3; 29. K-N3, R-N1+; 30.
K-R4, R-K4; 31. B-N4, Q-QN3 and
White gave up. Black has too many threats
(... Q x B mate, ... R x P+, ... R-R4+).

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

THE JUDGES who award Brilliancy Prizes
are fair game. In the Monte Carlo Olympiad
they missed by the far best hand—the
defence by Chages that I described in
'Bridge at the Top'. At Lausanne they did
not find a place among the five prizewinners
for this defence by Lindqvist, of Sweden,
which I would have placed among the first
two in the Bols contest.

Dealer, South. Love all.

♠ J 10 5		♥ 2
♦ 9 6 4		♠ Q 7 2
♣ A Q 10 9		♦ 6 4
♠ J 7 5		♣ Q 10 9 8 4 3 2
♠ K 8 4 3	N	
♥ 5 3	W	E
♦ K J 5	S	
♣ A K 6		
♠ A Q 9 7 8		
♥ A K J 10		
♦ 5 7 3 2		
♣ —		

Playing in Four Spades, South ruled the
opening lead of ♠ K, finessed ♠ Q, and ran
♠ J. When West held out, declarer followed
with a low spade to the Queen and King.
The defence continued clubs and South, to
maintain trump control, discarded two
diamonds on the Ace and Queen of clubs.
This left

♠ 10		♥ 2
♦ 9 6 4		♠ Q 7 2
♣ A 10 9		♦ 6
♠ —		♣ 10 9 4
♠ 8 4	N	
♥ 5 3	W	E
♦ K J	S	
♣ —		
♠ A 9		
♥ A K J 10		
♦ 8		
♣ —		

Realising that a ruff-and-discard would
not assist the declarer, East played another
club. South discarded a heart and took the
force in dummy. All that is needed now, as
can be seen, is a heart finesse. But...

On the fourth round of clubs Lindqvist,
West, did not discard a heart, but unneces-
sarily undertruffed. This gave South the
impression that West was guarding Q x of
hearts. Accordingly he came to hand with
♥ A and played off two trumps, thinking
that West would be squeezed and that the
King of hearts would bring down the Queen.

South could be taunted, because if East
had held nothing in hearts he would have
exited with a diamond to break up the
squeeze but that does not detract from the
imaginative defence by West.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



A MORE flexible policy announced earlier
this year will permit the Australian Post
Office to issue more pictorial stamps featur-
ing a wider range of Australian life and
culture. The first of these special issues
comprises four stamps depicting Australian
trees, among them the illawarra flame-tree
on the 10-cent stamp shown here. Native to
northern New South Wales and Queens-
land, this has bright red flowers and grows to
over 100 feet. For young collectors the
Australian Post Office now publishes a tree
Junior Stamp Review which describes in
lively style the background to new issues.
Specimen copies are available from Junior
Stamp Review, Philatelic Branch, Australia
Post, PO Box 302, Carlton South, Victoria
3053.



In February 1891, by permission of the Post
Office, 75 railway companies in Britain and
Ireland introduced an express service for
inland letters. In addition to the normal
postage, then 1d, each letter had to bear a
2d railway letter stamp. The letter would
then be dispatched by the first available
train and could either be collected from the
station nearest to its destination or handed
to the Post Office for delivery. Almost all the
stamps were in uniform numeral design like
this example from the Donegal Railway Co.
In mint condition or neatly used on the
original envelopes, most of these Victorian
railway stamps are now scarce and those
issued by some of the small companies are
very rare.

C. W. HILL

this india

prize rs 30 for the entry given first

without comment



CALCUTTA : Two human bodies made of straw were found by the police in the Burrabazar area on Friday (February 29) night. The bodies, wrapped in cloth, had been laid out on the pavement by some people to arouse the sympathy of passers-by on the eve of Holi. The police said one body was noticed near Satya Narayan Park in the evening. A lot of coins thrown by passers-by lay strewn near the body. When the police unveiled the body, it was found to be made of straw. A similar body was found near the New Howrah Bridge Approach Road. A total of Rs 93 was found near the bodies. No arrests were made—*The Statesman* (Mira Vachani, Calcutta)

GURGAON : Over 500 Hanuman devotees gave a tearful farewell to a monkey at Haily Mandi when he was cremated near a banyan tree on which he had been living for the last 20 years. The devotees took out a funeral procession with religious fervour. Several prominent persons of the township participated in the procession. Bhajan and kirtan were organised for "the peace of the departed soul". During his long stay in the market township the monkey never troubled the residents. This made people weave stories round him and religious men and women started

coming to the place to offer prayers. The most devout said that he was an incarnation of Hanuman. The devotees are thinking of building a memorial, a Hanuman temple, at the cremation site—*Tribune* (T. K. Mondal, Naya Nangal)

NEW DELHI : Indian Airlines aircraft are infested by cockroaches. Admitting this, the airline journal "Image" quotes airline engineers as saying that this was happening because the cockroaches had become immune to insecticides. The engineers have said that no effort will be spared to keep the aircraft clean—*Indian Express* (K. S. Somasunder, Bangalore)

BHJNORE : A group of butchers engaged in illegal slaughter of cows locked a police party in a house and set it on fire when police raided a clandestinely run slaughter house in Shechara town 40 KM from here. The butchers, according to the report, assaulted the police party with lathis and daggers and locked them in a house. They later set the house on fire and fled—*Afternoon* (V. M. S. Ramkrishnan, Coimbatore)

TIRUPATTUR : With the head of his paramour on the carrier of a bicycle, Pandurangan of Valli village arrived at the police station at Barur in Dharmapuri district and confessed to a grisly murder. For over four years there existed liaison between Pandurangan and Lakshmi, who was married and had a child of ten years. Pandurangan arrived at Lakshmi's house one night and found her with her husband. Driven by a fit of jealousy, he returned to Lakshmi's house the next morning and beheaded her. Then taking the head he walked to the police station. A passerby, terrified by the sight, fell off his cycle. Pandurangan grabbed the cycle, placed the head on the carrier and pedalled to the station. He was promptly arrested—*Indian Express* (A. V. Sasidharan, Trivandrum)

IF one had to award marks to Mrs Gandhi for the first 30 days in office, I'd give her five out of ten—pass, but not distinction—Vinod Mehta

THESE state Governments have not been functioning for the past three years. If they cannot govern for the people's welfare, they should get out—Mrs Gandhi quoted in *Newsweek*

WHY should a political Party not take advantage of the mistakes of its opponents?—Mrs Gandhi

FASCISM is on the prowl again. Its appetite to devour...remains unsatisfied—Charan Singh

HOW would Zail Singh like being called 'Jail Singh' — Headline in *Organiser*

DO you honestly think we will go around giving other people our nuclear secrets?—General Zia ul-Haq of Pakistan

IF they (Pakistan) keep down the (nuclear) road it will be more and more a problem for us—An American official quoted in the *Indian Express*

INDIA has too many hastily made laws—Y. V. Chandrachud, chief justice of India quoted in *Business India*

WE are sailing in a sea of difficulties. We have been in this sea for some time...the shore is far away—Fidel Castro of Cuba

I COULD turn this country (USA) around in the first 24 hours I was in office—John Connally

EVERY transaction helped line his (the Shah's) pocket. There was a cover-up for years—and that's why people are so mad now—Dr Cyrus Ibrahim Zaade, Deputy Finance Minister of Iran

THE trouble is that the Olympics and the Presidential elections are taking place in the same year—Lord Killanin, President of the International Olympic Committee

THE Press lives by disclosures, and I'd like to break three or four big ones each year — Bruce Page, editor of the *New Statesman*

THEIR (Japanese) idea of romance is totally different to our traditional concept. There, boy meets girl, they fall in love, can't marry and commit suicide and obviously cannot live happily ever after—Paul Scherer, managing director of Mills and Boon quoted in *This Fortnight*

ndia abroad

LONDON : Serious doubts are being expressed on "coloured justice pattern" of British magistrates which has come into open since last May. Most of the cases filed by immigrants are being adjourned without a date being fixed for the next hearing. Mr Sewa Singh Mandela and his son Gurinder recently demanded action against the Park Grove School, Birmingham, claiming that they had been discriminated as the school would not admit the Sikh boy because he wore a turban.

According to school authorities, Sikh boys have to conform to school rules by cutting their hair and not wearing turbans. The Mandelas are seeking damages for injured feelings "forcing the Sikh pupils to comply with rules contrary to the faith of Sikh religion." In a similar case before an industrial tribunal last week in Manchester, 18-year-old Farhut Malik won a case against British home stores, which refused her a job, because she wore shalvar (trousers) —*Indian Express*

S/C



REPAID

THE Haryana legislators, who had by their "foresight" defected to the Congress (I) soon after the Party's victory in the Lok Sabha elections, were not disappointed in the long run when the Haryana Vidhan Sabha was kept out of the dissolution list. The legislators belonging to the ruling Party called on Mrs Gandhi at her residence on February 5. A release issue by the public relations department of the Haryana Government on the occasion makes interesting reading: "When the Prime Minister announced that the Haryana Assembly was not being dissolved, the Ministers (and) MLAs lustily clapped." To reassure everybody that no major change was being mooted, the release added that the PM had advised Chaudhury Dalbir Singh, the PCC(I) president, "to go back to the hospital for rest. He had been ailing for the (past) few days and had specially come to attend the meeting at her residence."

POWERLESS IN OFFICE

THE Janata administration in Delhi has survived the dissolution axe, but its condition is even worse than that of the last of the Mughal emperors. The newly appointed police commissioner, Pritam Singh Bhinder, did not bother to pay a courtesy call on the Chief Executive Councillor (the equivalent of the Chief Minister in Delhi) after assuming charge. The newly-elected Lok Sabha members from Delhi, notably Charanjit Singh, Jagdish Tytler and Sajjan Kumar, have started summoning municipal

officials directly and discussing with them the civic problems of their constituencies. One Janata leader was lamenting the other day: "This is worse than superseding the civic body."

WAR OF WORDS

THE public relations directorate of the Delhi Administration has been caught in a crossfire in the war of words between the newly-appointed Lt. Governor, Jagmohan and the Executive Council. Almost every day the Lt. Governor is issuing some statement which is being resented by the Janata men in the Administration. The irony is that these statements and counter-state-

ments have to be prepared by the PR Directorate of the Administration. According to an employee of the directorate, many try to cut short the work by preparing a rejoinder as soon as they have prepared any statement for the VIPs. But whose side should the Administration's PR men take? It's like going into the fire from the frying pan. Technically they are under the charge of the Executive Council, but in the ultimate analysis, they have to keep the LG pleased because all annual confidential reports of the administration end up in his office. And with a strict administrator like Jagmohan around discretion surely is the better part of official decorum.

S/C



MISSING, PRESUMED DORMANT

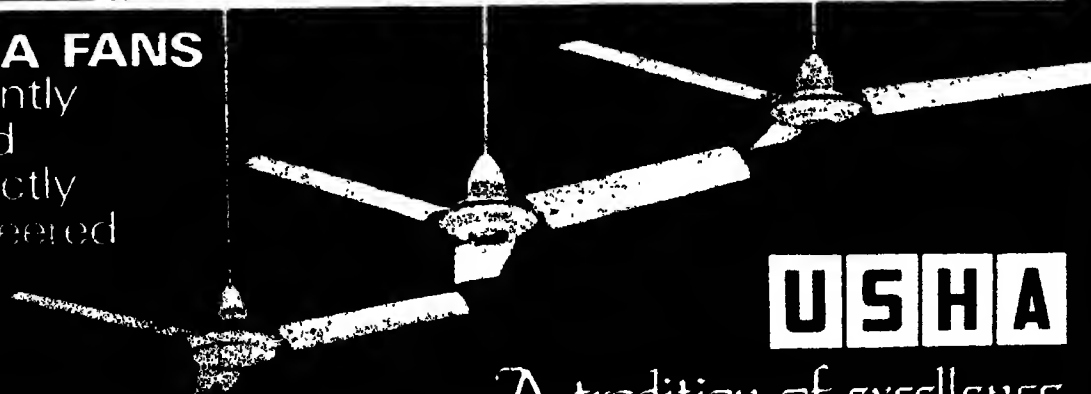
WHERE is Siddhartha Shankar Ray these days? According to reliable sources, he is back in the Congress (I) but due to one condition which had been imposed to please a powerful group in the West Bengal Congress (I), his defection is not being announced. Ray had ill-treated these persons during his days in power and they now seem to have paid him back by imposing a news blackout throughout the Party itself.

TAILPIECE: Should Morarji Desai come back to politics? This question was recently put to Chaudhury Charan Singh. Pat came the reply: "Before he returns to politics, there should be a nationwide referendum to ascertain whether the people want him to do so".

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The forgotten community

Withering away of the Janata

BY V. N. RAO

BY CHANDRA SHEKHAR

BY A. B. VAJPEYEE

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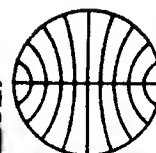
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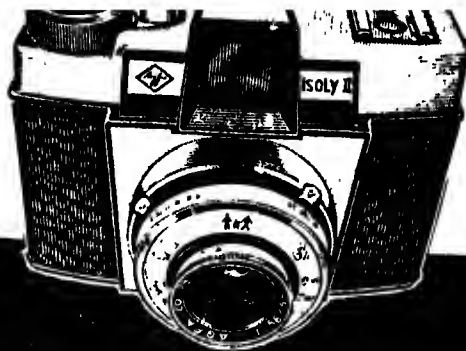
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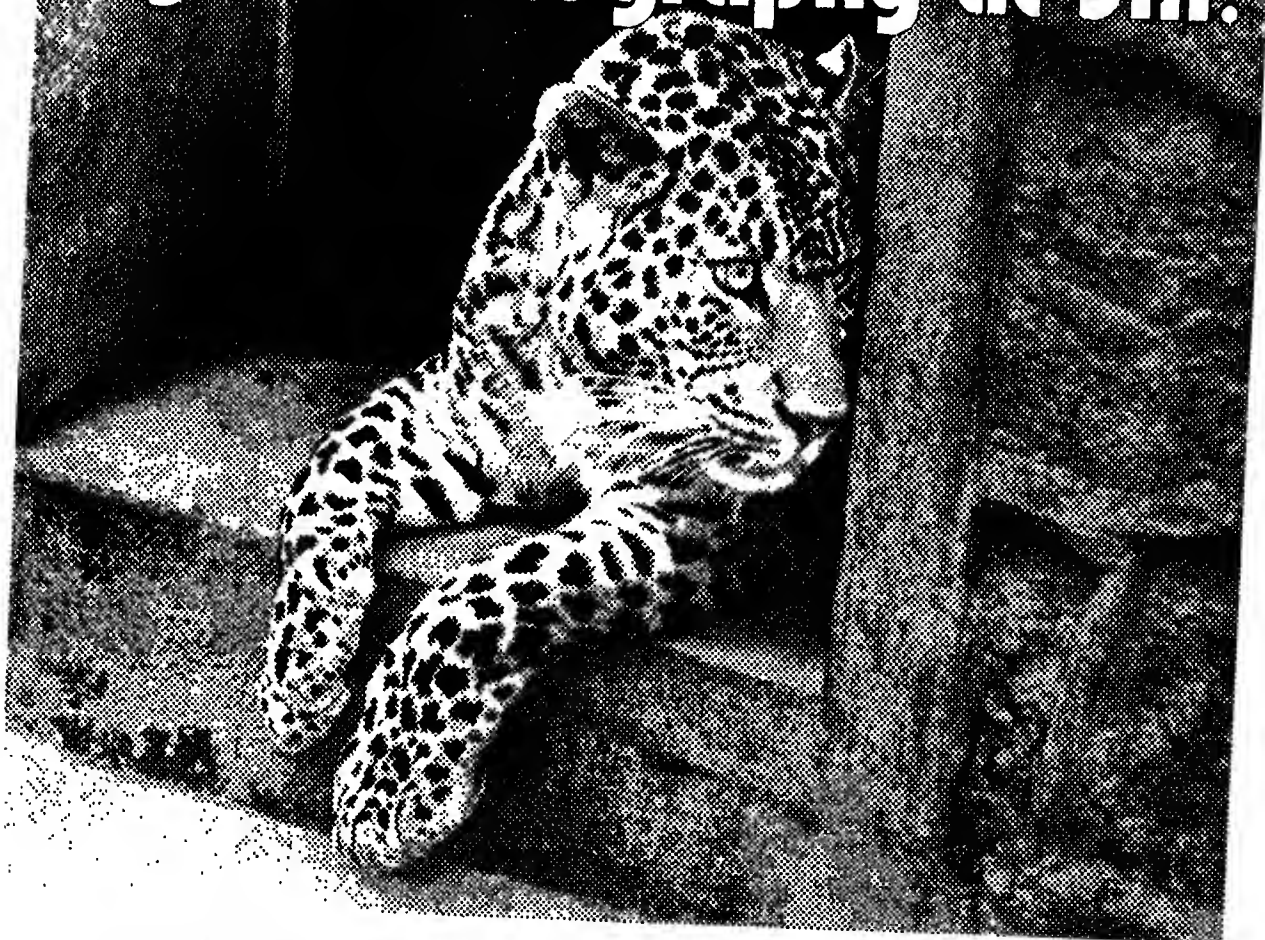
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A Guide to the
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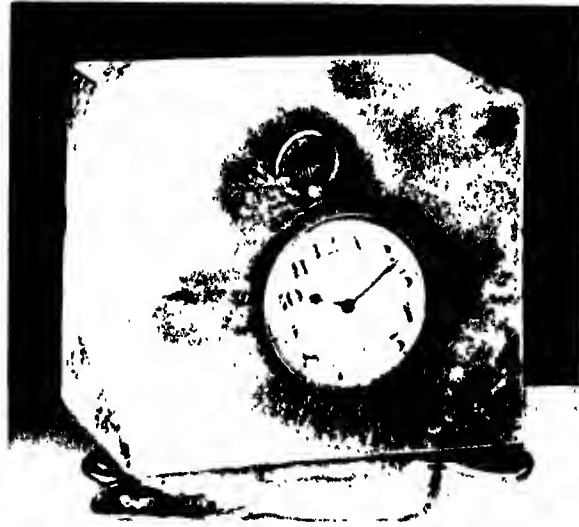
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The Janata seems to be totally devoid of any survival instincts. And as it splits again with the departure of Babuji, the opposition seems hell-bent to self destruct. Where does Chandra Shekhar stand? What are the underlying socio-economic causes? What are Babuji's plans?



Remember the Anglo-Indians? They disappeared even as they dug roots. The railways, customs, police and major ports were formerly their happy hunting grounds. Today they survive only in schools and hospitals. But they have done themselves proud in the armed forces. Why did they ever leave?

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Caste kills

THIS refers to your cover story on Parasbigha and Dohiya by Saumitra Banerjee and Arun Ranjan ("A cry of terror", February 17). I feel the Government and other political organisations should try to identify the root cause of such sad incidents: how do meek and simple villagers turn suddenly violent? One thing is clear—that Bihar is irretrievably divided on caste lines, and this is helping the feudal lords. A similar incident occurred later at Pupun, in Pipra village on February 25. All those attacked were Harijans again. Anil Kumar Ojha, Motihari.

RECENT happenings at Parasbigha and Dohiya have seriously threatened the very foundations of democracy and the federal structure: if the state governments fail to discharge their own duties of preserving law and order, the people will be bound to lose confidence in them and naturally turn to the Centre for redress. Gautam Kumar Sinha, Calcutta.

THE report mentions that the Sup-

reme Court's verdict was dishonoured by Ram Niranjan Sharma, who was murdered. What action did the Bihar Government take to protect the Court's verdict? If such action had been taken, I am sure the gruesome murder would not have occurred. After all, it is the duty of the Government, Central or State, to implement court orders. It is useless spending taxpayers' money on law courts if their verdicts are dishonoured by the governments themselves. Randendra Mukherjee, Siliguri.

WHAT really surprises me is that in a country which gave birth to humanists like Kabir, Guru Nanak, Sankardev and Vivekananda human life itself seems worthless. We Indians claim to be a pious people, in spite of genocide committed repeatedly in the name of caste, religion and language. In reality, it is vested interests that are to blame for all these. Opportunists who call themselves leaders are gambling with the lives of innocent citizens. Prateep Sen Gupta, Dighol.

THOUGH caste hatred has a major role in the butchery, the fact is that as long as India remains a Party-based democracy, nothing can rid her of this cancerous social trait. The possibility of communists exploiting the situation is also imminent. K. S. Raman, New Delhi.

THE memory of Parasbigha had hardly faded when Pipra was in flames. Again Harijans were the victims of this carnage. It is said Pipra is an area infested with Naxalites and criminals. The Harijans were persecuted by them since long. Khan Basera, Patna.

See our Pipra report—Editor

JUST as I was reading your cover story on Parasbigha and Dohiya, I came to know about the incident at Pipra. Quite irrationally, I started counting on my fingers the number of carnages Bihar had seen in a brief one year. Chandrashekhar Dubey, Bhagalpur.

Reason eclipsed

I HAVE gone through the reports on the eclipse by Raghu Rai, Nirmal Mitra and Ajoy Bose. The display of ignorance and stupidity on the occasion of the total solar eclipse by even men in responsible positions has made us the laughing stock of the civilised world. Pseudo-scientific reports on the hazards of watching the eclipse in the Press and the radio created a situation of near-panic. During the eclipse, streets were deserted as people everywhere shut themselves indoors. And we talk of nuclear energy and space research! Gautam Kumar Sinha, Calcutta.

RAGHU RAI's photographs of the eclipse were excellent. The text by Mr Mitra describes beautifully the setting and impressions of the eventful day at Konarak. Shirsanka, Calcutta.

MR MITRA has successfully brought out the anti-social and irrational nature of the practice of "pollution" among caste-conscious Hindus. It is also clear that All India Radio was more keen on propagating religious fallacies rather than presenting scientific explanations. It would be pertinent to quote Bertrand Russell: "Fear is the main source of superstition and one of the main sources of cruelty. To conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom, in the pursuit of truth as in the endeavour after a worthy manner of life." V. A. Poonkodi Selvan, Thiruvaiyaru.

THE eclipse provided welcome relief for those of us fed up with politics. This 'celestial ladsheeding' eclipsed all the contemporary brouhaha, from Ayatollah Khomeini to Assam aliens. In one of his brilliant essays, "On comets", Bertrand Russell wrote about man's curiosity in the past over the "appearance" and "disappearance" of comets. The fact is comets never appear or disappear. They are made to by superstitious men. Roma and Arindam Ghosh, Nagpur.

Blurred images

MY attention has been drawn to "The TV Spots Muddle" (February 3). I am surprised to note that a publication of the Ananda Bazar Group, which has a matchless reputation for observing the highest ethical standards in the profession of journalism has allowed the publication of baseless and malicious insinuations under the garb of comment. It is most surprising that the editor did not screen the article before actual publication.

I am not concerned with what Ashish Rajadhyaksha has written about others but as far as the Natio-

nal Council of Advertising Agencies (NCAA) of which I happen to be the President, is concerned, it is a most respectable and fully recognised organisation. All the 48 agencies which are members of NCAA are accredited to the IENS as well as the Government of India. No single non-recognised agency is a full-fledged or associate member of NCAA. NCAA is also the only professional body that organised the National Advertising Congress in India most successfully. It is singularly dedicated to the cause of raising the standards of advertising in India. Therefore, the insinuations of the author with regard to NCAA are wholly un-

justified and uncalled for. Vishwanath, President, The National Council of Advertising Agencies, New Delhi.

Ashish Rajadhyaksha replies: 1) Almost all the agencies known to have struck it rich after the new accreditation rules do in fact belong to the National Council of Advertising Agencies. 2) The NCAA has refused to support the Advertising Agencies Association of India in fighting a policy that is demonstrably detrimental to the interests of all above-board agencies, small or big. 3) The imposing sounding number of 48

members that the NCAA talks of contains practically none of the more reputed agencies, and the combined billing of all 46 cannot be over 10 per cent of the total business placed with the media annually, some 130 crores.

One is not trying to say that the 46 agencies do not have a right to start their own organisation. One is not—and this is important—trying to side with the AAAI in anything more than the limited pointed of the particular issue. In fact, lack of space forbade me from writing some more about the erstwhile racketeering of the very people who are so righteously renouncing corruption in the new system.

Instead of so righteously accusing me of 'baseless and malicious insinuations' and similar high rhetoric Mr Vishwanath might well have spent his time more fruitfully by explaining just why his group has refused to side with the AAAI. At least that might have put to rest the suspicion that the only reason could be the benefits the new system appears to offer some of its 46 members.

THE article has focused very effectively the racket going on at Bombay and Delhi Doordarshan in regard to the time allotted for the commercial advertisements and the priority in bookings. As alleged in the article, it is very shocking that the I and B Ministry is giving a boost to such backdoor methods of booking advertisements. We, on behalf of the viewers, small manufacturers and small agencies demand an enquiry. Members of the opposition Parties in Parliament should also ask for a thorough enquiry and help stop this menace, otherwise the genuine and small agencies which do not want to be a part of such tactics may suffer. Ultimately the middle and small manufacturers will find it very difficult to advertise their products with a limited budget.

Nikhil Buch, Convener, Bombay Doordarshan Darshak Sangh, Bombay.

What next?

THE book review "Domes of fortune" in the February 17 issue was marvellous. Is your next pick the "Pillars of glory"?

Chandra Shekhar, Allahabad.

I HAD occasion to go through Alan Brien's book, "Domes of fortune" some pictures from which were brought out in SUNDAY under the heading "Keeping abreast of the times". The book is a narrative of the varieties of female breasts as seen from different angles. In Sanskrit classics, especially Kalidasa's Kumarasamhawan and Vatsyana's Kamasutra, the description of female breasts is far more captivating. At one point it is said that when Brahma (the creator) conceived of the idea of

THE article is obviously 'sponsored' and is a crude attempt by the few big advertising agencies to pressurise the authorities to end the 'time rationing' scheme so that the monopolistic stranglehold of the agencies over TV commercials is perpetuated. That the author has indulged in lies and half-truths is evident from the following: Neither the author nor anybody else visited our firm, ADWEL, nor have we ever offered to "manage" bookings with Chitrahaas out of turn to any advertisers; the author alleges that agencies like ours sprang up only during 1979 when the booking position of TV commercials became very acute. In fact, ADWEL got accreditation in 1975 and prior to 1979 ADWEL booking of TV commercials was about Rs five lakhs a year. It is now only about Rs two lakhs; the article says that ADWEL specialises in outdoor advertising like hoardings. Is it a crime or is there any ban that outdoor agencies cannot do TV advertising. It will 'shock' the author to know that some of our Radio and TV Spots have won appreciation from even advertisers whose accounts are being handled by big agencies; and we do not know anything about ADWEL being a member of NCAA which, according to the author, has been formed by the 'inner circle of agencies'.

The booking already sent by five big agencies for April 1980 totals up to more time than the total time available over TV commercials. This fact alone demonstrates that the monopoly racket of big agencies must be busted by schemes like 'time rationing'. Small agencies and advertisers warn the I and B Ministry to be aware of such blackmailing attempts because already the Ministry has succumbed, wittingly or unwittingly to the lobbying by the big agencies by deciding to double the telecasting charges for Still Spots—a policy which may squeeze out both the small agencies and advertisers from doing TV commercials because most of the Still Spots are booked by them.

D. Sabharwal, ADWEL, Delhi.

creating woman, he prepared a compound after decades of research, and lovingly named it *Saunaaryam* (beauty). After shaping all other parts of the female form, he was still left with some matter that he thought of using in the best possible way. He pondered for a while, smiled, moulded the matter into two bowls, and stuck them on two sides of the woman's chest. He gazed at the creation and admired it. Nowhere has the prominence and charm of female breasts been better described as in Indian classics. No less immortal than the poets were the gifted yet unsung sculptors who carved their dream figures in stone. Breasts display all the varied charms of womanhood. Brien's book failed to bring this impression through.

Shivanath Prasad, Muzaffarpur.

Brute force

MY blood boiled as I read the report "Brutality at Narainpur" (February 10) about the murders, rape and other acts of barbarism by the police of Independent India. The incident will remain a black spot in the history of the Indian Police force, which is notorious for its brutality, corruption and partisanship, anyway. The atrocities by caste Hindus on the landless harijans were definitely committed with the active connivance of the police. The reason for such behaviour is perhaps a belief that no government will ever take action. K. Ramu, Bangalore.

THE Narainpur outrage was far worse than any communal or caste riot. Here the guardians of law and order were the criminals. Policemen, especially those belonging to the UP Provincial Armed Constabulary, are notorious for criminal activities. In her book *Reason Ruined*, Primila Lewis, who was once a prisoner of the Delhi Police, gives an authentic first-hand account of police barbarities, including the rape of petty women criminals. Cruelty is a general rule with the police all over the country. Kuntala Datta, Calcutta.

Maiden show

PIOUSJI writes in Khaas Baat (December 30, 1979) about Hema Malini that: "...she had bared her pretty shoulders for her very first film *Sapnon ka Saudagar*". Incidentally, this was not Hema's first film. Her first film was in Tamil: *Ethu Sakhyam*, made in 1962 when she was a girl of 14 (born October 16, 1948).

Samir Kumar Sutradhar, Khulapura.

Fun? None

THE total of the digits of 1980 is nine. Add nine to the total of the digits of any number and you will get the same result. There will be no difference. The "interesting feature" ("Fun with numbers", Opinion, February 70) Mr Ghosh has noticed is not true for 1980 alone but any year whose digital total is nine. Judging by the standard of the brain teaser, I shouldn't be surprised to see you publish ones like: "Think up a number add eight to it, subtract eight, and you get the same number."

T. S. Venkataramani, Madras.

"FUN with numbers" was not fun for me. One should know that all pure numbers are between zero and nine. The rest are combinations of these numbers. Hence, adding any digit with nine will always add up to the same number: thus 9 plus one equals 10, and one plus zero is one. Jagdish Rawat, Kanpur.

THE Janata is a strange creature. It quarrels when in power, it splits when out of power. It has disproved two common theories: power is a great cementing force and adversity makes strange bed-fellows. This fact alone should be enough to prove that there must be some important socio-economic reasons for even the residual Janata to split.

The tragedy of well-wishers of the Janata is that it is sought to be kept together on the basis of only democracy. In 1980, democracy alone cannot be the basis of a political Party. It could have been, had complete social, economic and political tranquillity been prevailing in the country. But it is not. In many areas, the conflict of interests between different social groups has assumed such proportions that it is not possible to harmonise the interests. Such conflicts can be resolved in favour of those sections which succeed in capturing political power. Parties are instruments to capture power and democracy is the framework in which this power is used. It

is also a painful reality that with 48 to 50 per cent of the people living below the poverty line and with an aggressive social order under which Harijans are burnt alive and culprits go scot free, democracy has little meaning for a majority of our people.

While democracy alone cannot become the basis of a political Party, it can certainly become the basis of a movement. It is said that the return of Mrs Gandhi has once again made democracy a central issue in India. This is, perhaps, an over reaction. With Mrs Gandhi winning the elections, there are many who would like to give her the benefit of the doubt. But if democracy is visibly threatened again, what prevents different political Parties, otherwise pursuing antagonistic social and economic goals but committed to the democratic framework, from coming together to defend democracy? In the period between 1975-77 the CPI(M) joined hands with staunch anti-Communists like P. C. Sen but they parted company soon after Mrs Gandhi was out of power. A political Party is more than a movement. It is possible to build up a movement on a one-point programme, but a political Party has to have homogeneous social and political objectives on a number of important issues to stay together. Babuji, whom the "democratic" Press all of a sudden wants to reduce to a political "untouchable", was sharing his inner thoughts when he said: "After the general elections (1977), I had misgivings about the viability of the Janata Party. I reasoned that people belonging to such disparate groups as had come together to form the Janata Party with only one common objective of overthrowing the Emergency regime would not stay together for very long."

In retrospect, it would not be proper to blame Charan Singh's personal ambitions alone for the split in the Janata. His personal ambitions could predominate those of the Janata Party only when this converged with three other factors: a big fall in the prices of agricultural produce, articulation of backward castes-upper castes conflicts and a spate of communal riots. For two years, 1977 and 1978, the peasants

Withering away of the Janata

BY KEWAL VARMA



had been the loser in sharing the national cake as the prices of their produce were falling and the prices of manufactured goods they had to buy, were increasing. In fact, the Janata Party split on the day the farmers had to sell their potato at 10 paise a kilo and burn their standing sugarcane crops. In this situation, if Charan Singh had not split the Janata, he would have been politically finished. Similarly, with the sharpening of caste conflicts and total alienation of Muslims from the Janata, it was only prudent to react to the issues, rather than remain passive.

EVEN the formation of the Janata Party was a strange quirk of history. The disparate groups which formed the Janata Party had been, for decades, pursuing antagonistic social and economic objectives. These were the Jana Sangh which had Hindu rashtira as its ideological cornerstone, the Congress (O) which was formed to give a rightist slant to economic policies, the Swatantra which had been unashamedly pro-capitalist and pro-price rise, the BLD whose sole pre-occupation was to promote the interests of peasant proprietors, the Lohia Socialist group which consisted of militant social democrats and the PSP which was an insipid social democratic Party. There were some individuals like Jagjivan Ram, Chandra Shekhar and H. N. Bahuguna, who were broadly left-of-centre politicians ploughing their lonely furrows. They came together primarily because they were prepared to compromise to an extent to capture power. This, however, did not necessarily mean that the social forces they were representing had also got tired and were ready to sacrifice their interests.

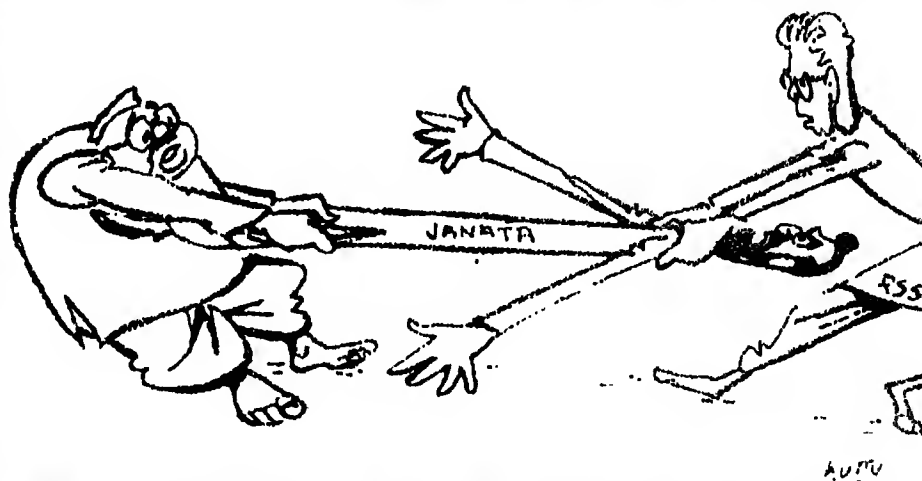
When these Parties faced difficulties under the Emergency, JP influenced them and superimposed on them a confused, vague and hypocritical slogan of 'total revolution'. The 1974 and 1975 upsurge against Mrs Gandhi in Bihar and Gujarat in essence was a backlash against feudal and semi-feudal forces resulting from the signals given to tamper with the system. Then, once the dust settled down, it was not difficult for Mrs Gandhi to reclaim Gujarat. If she has not been so successful in Bihar, it is because in the meantime the backward castes have become more articulate. JP, irrespective of the social forces which those agitations strengthened, jumped into the fray to utilise the movement to serve his Utopian objective of 'total revolution.' In 1974, in the course of a discussion, JP admitted that landless Harijans, poor peasants and the working class had not joined his Bihar movement. He also admitted that students who are mostly

from the upper castes and landed classes were in the forefront of the movement. In the villages, invariably the largest landholder was the supporter of the JP movement. When questioned on how he could achieve total revolution with such forces behind him, he got annoyed and said: "Let me first capture political power then I will outmanoeuvre them." No wonder, JP died a frustrated man. This is the tragedy and fate of all those who consider themselves to be above social forces.

Look at Babuji. He admitted that all along he had strong reservations against the RSS. But he said: "I had reasoned that if I possessed the necessary leverage to implement the socio-economic programme of the Janata Party, in case it came to power after the elections, I would be in a position to check and contain the unhealthy trend of the people who lacked in commitment towards their programme". No tears need

we see an interesting situation. Vajpayee writes an article, then goes to Nagpur and apologises. Advani asserts, "I am proud of my RSS association", yet he cannot stop the RSS from working openly against his colleague in the national executive, Mr Krishna Kant, and then at first agreeing that the Jana Sangh leaders will not participate in RSS activities and later going back on it. No wonder in this situation even their best friend in the Janta Party, Chandra Shekhar, has turned against them.

THE position of Jana Sangh elements becomes more anomalous with the RSS continuing to poke its nose in purely political matters. Much has been said about Balasahel Deoras' tilt towards Mrs Gandhi. Take another sensitive political issue—the agitation in Assam. RSS leaders have been going to Assam and trying to give a communal



be shed for Babuji for his self-deception, not to speak of the wide benefit of the doubt granted him in assuming that he ever seriously bothered about such things.

Of all the groups which formed the Janata Party, only two, the Lok Dal and the Jana Sangh are sure of their independent strength. Hence they have been continuously working to see that their distinct social support base is not obliterated in the elusive search to form a national party embracing all classes. The Lok Dal resolved its dilemma by walking out of the Janata Party. The Jana Sangh has been postponing the decision, partly in the hope of capturing the whole of the Janata Party and partly because its top leadership, particularly, Atal Behari Vajpayee and L. K. Advani have been paralysed by the conflict between their heart and head. In cooler moments they realise that the RSS ideology has reached a dead end, but because of sentiments or lack of conviction, they cannot break away from the RSS. So

twist to the agitation. It issued an official statement that Bengali Muslims should be thrown out and not Bengali Hindus. In fact, the RSS stamp is so deeply imprinted on Jana Sangh leaders that in an unguarded moment even a liberal leader like Atal Behari Vajpayee reveals his RSS colours. He virtually said that the Janata failed because it failed Babuji and the country is not prepared to accept a Harijan as Prime Minister. There are a hundred and one good reasons why the Janata failed. Perhaps the most important was that its secular credentials were not accepted because of the Jana Sangh. Similarly, the personal factor which went against Babuji was not that he was a Harijan but the impression he gave on the eve of the elections that he might defect to Mrs Gandhi's camp. But Vajpayee, with his brahminical bias instilled in him by the RSS ideology, finds fault with Babuji on the ground that he is a Harijan!

Many self-appointed 'mujahids of democracy' feel pained at the articu-

A last desperate act

EVER since the results of the mid-term polls spelt doom for the Janata Party, Babu Jagjivan Ram had been thinking of the possibility of forming a new Party. It is true that the ageing leader had never been comfortable in the Janata since the very day he joined the Party. But Babuji's innate inertia to make a move and his obsession to become Prime Minister had always held him back.

After Morarji Desai resigned from Prime Ministership in July, last year, Babuji had made a strong bid to replace him but Charan Singh beat him to the post. When Babuji with the help of Mrs Indira Gandhi managed to force the Chaudhury to resign in August 1979, fate in the guise of President Sanjeeva Reddy thwarted him again.

There was still some hope for the Janata Party to come to power in the mid-term polls. Although there was tremendous pressure from his son, Suresh Kumar, to come to an understanding with Mrs. Gandhi, Babuji after a lot of prevarication which gave jitters to the Janata, finally decided to stay on in the Party. It was only after the Janata rout in the polls, that Babuji's hopes were dashed. There was very little left for him to continue in the Janata. After being paraded as the only able national leader, who could lead the country, Babuji was reduced by the poll results to the favourite 'whipping boy' of various Janata politicians since he had failed to deliver the goods. Frustrated in his quest for power and humiliated every day by his Party colleagues, Babuji got increasingly desperate to leave the Janata. One alternative was to join the Congress (I) and Suresh Kumar met Sanjay Gandhi a number of times to work out some arrangement.

After one of Babuji's chief lieutenants, Bhajan Lal, crossed over with his Government in Haryana, there was speculation about a similar move by Babuji. But Jagjivan Ram had no Government to cross over with. Consequently, his bargaining power with Mrs. Gandhi was not much. In fact, Mrs. Gandhi was shrewd enough to realise that Babuji would be of much more use to her as a Trojan Horse inside the Janata than as a member of her Party which already had innumerable contenders for power and position. The example of

Bahuguna also weighed heavily on the mind of Babuji and must have vitally influenced his final decision. Even if Babuji himself could accept the post of a figurehead in the Congress, Suresh Kumar was not ready to kill his own political future so soon. The meeting of Babuji's supporters in late February also revealed that not many members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha would follow him to the Congress (I). Even bitter critics of the RSS like Ram Dhan and Krishna Kant came out against leaving the Janata Party hastily.

But there was no way Babuji could stay on in the Party any longer. His attempts to raise the dual membership issue had failed to draw support from the anti-RSS group itself inside the Party. Most members of the Janata had some reservation or the other about the RSS but nearly all were reluctant to be associated with Babuji as well. The announcement by Babuji disassociating himself from the Janata, therefore, was the move of a desperate man who neither had a support base nor enough moral credibility. For the moment, it is highly unlikely that more than ten MPs would join Babuji's Party. Of these ten, seven are members of the Rajya Sabha of whom four will retire in March, 1980.

Babuji's attempts to draw people from other political Parties have not been particularly successful so far. Although, there are some in the Congress (U) like Rajni Patel, Priyaranjan Das Munshi and Purabi Mukherjee who would like to unite with Babuji, important leaders like Y.B. Chavan and even Congress President Devaraj Urs are extremely reluctant to go along with Jagjivan Ram. There is, of course, no question of any association with the Lok Dal, since according to Babuji, Chaudhury Charan Singh is his worst enemy, even more than the RSS. The Left Front has been cautiously optimistic about the formation of a new Party by Babuji, but apart from the odd electoral adjustment for the Assembly elections, they are not expected to associate too much with it. For the moment, the emergence of Suresh Kumar on the political horizon will be a major aspect of Babuji's Party. According to sources close to Babuji, he will be given an important position in the Party and will look after the organisation.

AOJOY BOSE



Nanaji Deshmukh

lation of the contradictions within the opposition. They think that unless there is a Congress-type all-India, all-class Party, Mrs Gandhi's challenge cannot be met. Mrs Gandhi is certainly a big beneficiary of the historical legacy of the nationalist movement. The Congress had retained substantially its multi-class support base for a number of years after Independence. The first signs of a big erosion in this base became visible in 1967. The lost ground was sought to be revived in 1969. However, the 1971, 1977 and 1980 election results have proved that the committed support base of the Congress has considerably shrunk. If it won the elections in 1971 and 1980 it was because of a wave and floating votes. These floating votes can desert the Congress (I) as easily as they came over to it. The Congress of today has been most shabbily put together by Mrs Gandhi and her son. Such an organisation will be swept off its feet in the event of a mild adverse current. Further, a party which is sought to be made a pale version of the Congress will not be durable. Janata's additional handicap is that it is looked upon as being more rightist than the Congress (I). It could not discard its image even by electing Chandra Shekhar as its president. Stability in Indian politics will come only when Parties are formed on the basis of relatively homogeneous social groups. Attempts to keep the support of the poorest and the richest in the country can succeed only temporarily. This is because class formations among the poorer sections have become more distinct and their degree of articulation is increasing. The national cake is too small to be shared equitably between the rich and the poor.

It is, therefore, not accidental that in the last decade only the left movement in pockets of West Bengal and Kerala has proved to be the most durable political force. Unlike other

Parties, the left concentrated on relatively homogeneous social forces. The only other Party which has stood its ground, albeit in a limited manner, is the Lok Dal but the tragedy of the Lok Dal is that by reflecting peasant individualism and parochialism, its leaders have become inherently incapable of broadening its support base. This was amply illustrated during Charan Singh's six-month tenure as Prime Minister. The Lok Dal has, perhaps, reached its limits. On its own, it cannot go very far from what it achieved in the last parliamentary election. But the peasantry can be a very useful political "cannon fodder" in an alliance among relatively homogeneous social forces. Unfortunately, Charan Singh and his Jat and Ahir brigade articulate peasant proprietor-landless Harijan contradictions more than contradictions between the peasantry and the traders and the peasantry and industrial capitalism. This naturally limits the scope of an alliance in which Charan Singh is a major partner.

THE stability in the Party system could come only if a new chapter is opened. Objectively, there is scope for a rightist Party which could articulate the interests of the proprietary classes and of a social democratic Party. Potentialities for a rightist Party should not be ignored. In the last 30 years of economic development, the propertied classes have expanded both in the urban and rural areas. With the abolition of the zamindari system and the green revolution, the institution of peasant proprietorship up to the middle farmer level has consolidated. Even though the propertied classes are still in a minority, they wield considerable political influence because of their economic strength. It is a safe bet that Mrs Gandhi is the most trusted and enlightened representative of the propertied classes. On the other hand, the left of the West Bengal and Kerala variant is showing no sign of rising to the occasion and filling the vacuum at the national level. At the moment one can see an alternative only in terms of personalities. Those who have potentialities are Babuji, Chandra Shekhar and Devaraj Urs. H. N. Bahuguna, who is sulking in the Congress (I), could be a dark horse. Unfortunately, Y. B. Chavan has shown no promise in the last three years. Apart from public stature, what will matter is perception and perseverance. Socialists can play an important role in building a national alternative since socialists have nothing to lose except their second class citizenship status in the Janata and the Lok Dal.

One has to reconcile oneself to the fact that the entire process will take some time to be set into motion. In the short run perhaps more defeats and frustrations are in store. Attempts to secure instant relief by having either a hold-all unity or electoral adjustments will not succeed much. Many commentators prove their point by reeling off voting per-

centage figures of the last parliamentary elections. But in political arithmetic, two plus two is rarely four. It is either five or three. It is five when there is adjustment or unity of relatively homogeneous social forces, it is three when social forces are antagonistic in the context of articulation of current issues. At the moment there is no Emergency-type issue which will relegate normal social and economic antagonism in society to the background. When caste articulation has been taken to such a pitch, can a Rajput be made to vote for a backward caste Lok Dal candidate? Similarly, will a Chammar who voted for the Janata in the last election in the hope of Babuji becoming Prime Minister, vote for the Lok Dal candidate in the coming Assembly elections? The experience of the recent parliamentary by-elections is not very encouraging. Rough-

ly speaking, the position will be like this. If the Lok Dal candidate is of the backward caste then the Janata will be able to transfer only 40 per cent of its votes for him and the balance of 60 per cent may go to the Congress (I). If the Lok Dal candidate is a non-backward caste person then that 40 per cent may increase to 45 or 60 per cent. The Lok Dal, perhaps, may be in a better position than the Janata to transfer the bulk of its votes to a Janata candidate in the event of an electoral alliance. Since the Assembly elections are now round the corner, it may not be feasible to escape some ad hoc response to the compulsions of elections. This ad hocism will, however, lead nowhere. So, sooner rather than later, conscious attempts will have to be made to open a new political chapter in India without which a degree of durability cannot be imparted to the Party system.

Countdown to the split

By AJAY BOSE

A FEW weeks after the mid-term poll results were announced, at a Janata Party high command meeting discussing the election rout of the party, the ever ebullient and sometimes profound Piloo Mody made a sudden intervention. "Can anybody here tell me why the Janata Party won in 1977?" he asked. There was an embarrassed silence. "See! There is no answer," continued the Janata member, "we do not know why we won in 1977. And we

don't know why we lost in 1980. What's the point in a post-mortem?"

For the Janata Party, history has been indeed repeating itself according to the classical Marxian dictum, the first time as tragedy and the second time as farce. When Chaudhury Charan Singh, Raj Narain, Madhu Limaye and George Fernandes left the Party last July, many Janata politicians including some senior leaders claimed that after the 'defectors' left, the Party would be far more cohesive. In fact,



Kamal Saha

most scribes had painted the Chaudhury as the villain of the piece and reduced the whole Party split to the political ambitions of Charan Singh and other 'defectors'. The bitter in-fighting among the various political groups in the Janata Party which continues till today, has completely demolished this myth.

The portents of an impending crisis in the Janata Party were clear even in January just a few weeks after Mrs Gandhi was back in the chair. RSS chief Balasaheb Deoras made an impassioned plea to her expressing his and his organisation's full support to her "even if she did not want it". At the same time, there was growing criticism amidst the Janata ranks of the two erstwhile pillars of the Party—the RSS and the charisma of Babu Jagjivan Ram.

The Janata Party had gone into the mid-term polls with Babuji as the head and the RSS as the tail. Jagjivan Ram was expected to provide the charisma and the RSS its muscle and organisation. Unfortunately for the Janata Party, the head repelled instead of attracting while the tail, if it wagged at all, did so for Mrs. Gandhi.

The consequent rout of the Janata Party in the polls therefore also resulted in a major loss of face for both Babuji as well as the RSS. Balasaheb's public support to Mrs. Gandhi and increasing reports of Babuji acting as her Trojan Horse in the Party, further vitiated the atmosphere in the Janata. Ironically, the two groups in the Party most bitterly opposed to each other were Babuji and the Jana Sangh constituent. While leaders like Atal Behari Vajpayee, Nanaji Deshmukh and Sundar Singh Bhandari increasingly blamed the failure of the Janata Party on Babuji and privately abused him as "unreliable and Mrs. Gandhi's stooge", Jagjivan Ram and his friends did not spare the RSS in both private and public discussions.

Even the arbitrary dissolution of the nine State Assemblies by Mrs. Gandhi failed to contain the growing rift between the different constituents of the Janata Party. On the very day after the dissolution, Babuji indicated the extent of his alienation from the Janata Party. In a surprise statement in Kanpur, Babuji announced that he was calling a meeting of his supporters on February 23 to decide whether he should stay in the Party. He also announced that the Janata Party will not enter into electoral pacts with any of the Opposition Parties. Furious at this public statement by Babuji, other constituents of the Janata Party reacted strongly. Surendra Mohan refuted Babuji's statement on electoral adjustments with opposition parties the next day saying that this was not the official Party line.

On February 20 Chandra Shekhar went even further to hint that he would not mind Babuji leaving the Party. He said that he could not understand the propriety behind Babuji's calling a separate meeting of his supporters. Atal Behari Vajpayee was even more categorical. "Those who want to leave the Party need not invent excuses for it," he said, reacting to Babuji's letter to his supporters which accused the RSS of working for Mrs. Gandhi. On February 23 and 24 over 200 supporters of Babuji met and bitterly criticised the RSS and most speakers were unanimous that it was not possible for Babuji to continue in the Janata Party. The few who tried to advise a less hasty course were shouted down. Among them were Ram Dhan and Krishan Kant, both bitter critics of the RSS but who still maintained that Babuji should not leave the party. "Mrs. Gandhi is the biggest authoritarian," said Ram Dhan but this was greeted with boos and jeers from most of the audience among whom were interestingly some who had already joined the Congress(I). Meanwhile, six Janata leaders including Ashok Mehta, H. M. Patel, N. G. Goray, Ravindra Verma, S. M. Joshi and Gauri Shankar Rai—all belonging to the Congress (O) and Socialist constituent, urged Chandra Shekhar to take action against Babuji. An emergency Janata Parliamentary Party meeting was called on February 25 to take a decision on Babuji's activities.

Just as it seemed sure that Babuji would either be thrown out of the Party or leave it himself, he did a sudden volte face. In a surprise move which left Party politicians and newspaper scribes completely bewildered, Babuji attended the Parliamentary Board meeting on February 25, and expressed his regrets for criticising Janata leaders like Chandra Shekhar and Vajpayee. The unconditional apology took the wind out of the sails of Babuji's critics and the Board meeting ended on an amicable note. The same night, however, Babuji did yet another somersault. In a letter to Chandra Shekhar, he raised the question of dual membership again and asked the Party president to settle the issue immediately. Jagjivan Ram said that he and his supporters would not compromise on the 'RSS connection' of some of the Janata leaders, particularly since the RSS had worked for Mrs Gandhi in the polls and even after the rout of the Janata, extended public support to her.

The crisis in the Party started all over again. Next morning, L. K. Advani wrote a strong letter to Chandra Shekhar expressing his and the Jana Sangh constituents' anger and regret about charges of "dual loyalty" raised by Babuji. In protest the Jana Sangh members

boycotted the National Executive and the Parliamentary Board meeting. Instead the Jana Sangh members held an emergency meeting at Advani's house where softliners like Advani and Vajpayee were hauled up by Jana Sangh workers and leaders for compromising on the RSS issue. At one point in the meeting, most of the members wanted Advani to declare immediately that they would quit the Janata and form a separate Party. Among those who favoured leaving the Janata were Sundar Singh Bhandari, Kushabhao Thakre and S. P. Mathur. Nanaji Deshmukh, although otherwise a RSS hardliner was trying to follow a middle path. For perhaps the first time in its history, the Jana Sangh rank and file publicly expressed its anger with some major leaders. Men like Vajpayee, Advani, and Bhairon Singh Shekhawat were abused openly as "impotent political stooges" who have been selling the Party and the RSS for paltry Ministerial privileges. The workers reminded these leaders that whatever political status they enjoyed it was because of their connection with the RSS. The leaders were told categorically that unless they were able to stop the "canard against the RSS" by Janata leaders, they would either have to quit the Janata or the RSS as well as most of the Jana Sangh workers would disown them.

Meanwhile at the Parliamentary Board meeting, the militant mood of the Jana Sangh constituent had scared most of the other constituents of the Janata Party temporarily. A sudden departure by the Jana Sangh group could well mean the disintegration of the Party. While many of them were secretly of exactly the same opinion as Babuji, they were eager to bring about a compromise formula to save the Party. Most of them were furious with Babuji for antagonising the Jana Sangh constituent, and Chandra Shekhar himself was of the opinion that Babuji had become a first rate liability to the Party. The Parliamentary Board refused to pass Babuji's demand for the Jana Sangh to completely dissociate with the RSS. Instead they took a softer line and wanted a solution to be worked out on the basis of the July 1979 formula which called for office-bearers of the Janata Party and Members of Parliament and State Legislatures, not to take part in the day-to-day activities of the RSS. Hoping that it would placate the Jana Sangh constituent, Chandra Shekhar sent a strongly worded letter to Babuji the same night, criticising him for shifting his earlier stand and for his "unbecoming behaviour as a responsible member of the party". The next day Babuji resigned from the leadership of the Janata Parliamentary Party in protest and from all indications, it seemed that it was only a matter

of time that he would either be thrown out of the Party or leave it himself.

Babuji's departure has already signalled the start of the disintegration of the Party. Seven members of the Rajya Sabha including Dinesh Singh, Ganpat Bhagat, Subedar Prabhu Singh, Shivendra Singh, Nathu Singh and N. P. Naidu are expected to leave with him. Two members of the Lok Sabha, Satadev Singh and Nihal Singh are also likely to follow Babuji. There is also a strong feeling that the Bihar strongman and Lok Sabha Member Satyendra Narain Singh along with his two family member MPs might leave the Janata. Satyen Babu is particularly upset about the way RSS workers behaved in his constituency during the mid-term polls. He has already written a letter to Chandra Shekhar complaining about how the RSS worked against him and has even submitted a list of workers who tried to defeat him. If Satyendra Narain Singh leaves the Janata, the Party would hardly be left with any base to fight the coming Assembly elections in Bihar. The rest of the Party is also

singularly unhappy. The Socialists are a divided lot. On one hand is Surendra Mohan who is not all happy at the prospect of remaining in a Party dominated by the Jana Sangh constituent. He is very keen on Chandra Shekhar working out an arrangement to revive the old Janata but this time without the Jana Sangh. Madhu Dandavate is against such an arrangement, however, and is keen that the Janata Party remains in its own. Dandavate has hopes that his name might be proposed to either replace Babuji as the leader of the Parliamentary Party or as the president of the Janata. Dandavate feels that the Janata cannot do without the Jana Sangh constituent for the present and is willing to co-exist with it. The Socialists are further confused by the efforts of Raj Narain and Madhu Limaye to reconvene Socialists of all Parties together and work out the parameters of a new Party or united democratic front. Surendra Mohan is reportedly very keen on this idea. The Congress (O) constituent is not quite sure what to make of Morarji's new bid for leadership in the Party and a political comeback. Mr

Desai has completely forgotten his pledge last year to retire from active politics and has been making frantic visits to almost every Janata leader's house to further his position of becoming the leader of the Janata Parliamentary Party. While Morarji is himself not a member of Parliament, he is quick to point out the example of Mrs Gandhi who was leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party without being an MP. Morarji reportedly met the Rajmata of Gwalior also and asked her to plead his case to the Jana Sangh constituent for its support. And presiding over this huge mess that is the Janata Party today, is a sad, confused and embittered Chandra Shekhar. For the moment he is playing for time. He admits that the 'dual membership' issue cannot be put into cold storage. He also knows that most of the present-day Janata politicians have become completely redundant. What he hopes is for a national Party with a popular base and progressive ideology. What he has, however, is a disintegrating Party which could be wiped out completely after the Assembly elections.

'The RSS has a secret alliance with the Congress (I)'

JAGJIVAN RAM tells A. N. PRABHU in an exclusive interview

Q: Would you tell us about the new Party you propose to form?

A: The idea is to have a strong opposition Party, which will be secular, which will be free from casteist and communal influences and will be working for the establishment of a socialist society. The talk at present is authoritarianism. Any opposition Party which is democratic cannot tolerate any concentration of power in the hands of either an individual or a group of individuals. That is a negation of democracy. All my life, I have stood and worked for democracy. Any infringement of democratic norms will have to be resisted and I will always be ready to resist any such tendency. Any Party I am associated with will stand for democracy and will resist all efforts to concentrate power, either political or economic, in the hands of individuals, groups or classes. It will fight authoritarianism relentlessly.

Q: In your statement of March 7 announcing your decision to split the Janata Party, you had said, and I quote: "It seems as if they (RSS) had a secret alliance with the Congress (I). Do you have any concrete

instance to substantiate this?

A: Yes, it is not just inference. As a matter of fact, this was based on a statement that was made by the ex-Chief Minister of Gujarat who issued it (the statement) immediately after Mr Balasaheb Deoras' statement. I have been drawing upon the statement of the ex-Chief Minister of Gujarat who has been very close to

the Jana Sangh (and is so) even at present. In his subsequent statement he has declared that he would continue with his combination with the Jana Sangh in Gujarat. Besides there are many evidences to this effect right from the days since Mr Balraj Madhok came out from the Jana Sangh.

Q: But the Jana Sangh people say that Mr Deoras was not correctly reported...

A: But Mr Deoras himself has not contradicted it. The whole thing is, when such a thing appears in newspapers, it is taken as correct until it is contradicted. Until now that statement or interview has not been contradicted by Mr Balasaheb Deoras.

Q: But there had been persistent reports also about your alleged talks with Congress (I) leaders prior to the



last Lok Sabha elections.

A: There are certain persons who are always interested, and some newspapers also in spreading canards. I don't know whether they have been chartered by some Parties or agencies to malign me. Just the day I had held a Press conference, the next day comes the *Hindustan Times* (with some allegations or speculations). I think some of the newspapers have been entrusted with the work of maligning me on this score. Such allegations had been made for the past few months but I continue where I was. In view of that experience... for people to go on repeating the falsehood... Everyday it was coming... Everything was fanned. Still they persisted...

Q: You also say in your March 7 statement that the "nation is today confronted with an array of grave dangers..." It is nearly two months since the new Government has come into power. Do you feel this Government will be able to meet these dangers you spoke about?

A: The problems are very grave and great and the problems are difficult for any Government. I will not judge the competence or success or failure of this Government on the basis of functioning of the last two months. I will give them more time. But the style of functioning on authoritarian lines is evident.

Q: You have also said in your statement that there is a "total lack of clear formulation of ideological or programmatic policies of the Government". Would you elaborate?

A: Up till now nothing has come. If it comes then I can elaborate. We are faced with a grave economic crisis. Up till now no formulation has come from the Government as to how they are going to surmount these difficulties and when it (the formulation) comes, it should cover both the ideological and the programmatic... But nothing has come.

Q: Your statement also talks of the nation's moral and economic strength having already been dangerously depleted through total unconcern and incompetence of the preceding Government. In this connection, could you elaborate what should be our attitude, approach and policy towards our neighbouring countries in general and in regard to the Afghan question in particular, with reference to the role of the super powers?

A: I have always held that success or failure of the foreign policy of any Government would depend upon what relations it has with its immediate neighbours. There is no use of having friendly relations with remote countries without striving hard to have good relations with our immediate neighbours. I have always held, and I stick to it, that we must strive hard to have good relations with our immediate neighbours. Fortunately, we are a much larger country both in size and in population and naturally the responsibility of a larger country is greater insofar as friendly relations are concerned. Because

I think some newspapers have been entrusted with the task of maligning me.

some concessions by a bigger Party are regarded as a generous gesture whereas any concession by a smaller country is regarded as surrender. We must have good relations with those countries. The Afghan question has brought big powers on the border of India and escalation would be of great consequence to our country. I therefore demand that the presence of all foreign powers—direct or indirect—in Afghanistan should be immediately withdrawn as a first step. I have said nothing new. We have repeated it at international forums.

Q: There has been talk of an alliance between various Parties for the coming nine Assembly elections. You have said you would have nothing to do with casteist Parties. What about others?

A: Newspapers bring all sorts of reports about adjustments of seats between various Parties. Nothing concrete, it appears, has been achieved up till now in this direction. It would be a good thing if multiplicity of candidates of political Parties is avoided. Of course, in this country you cannot rule out the possibility of a large number of Independents. It would be a good thing if political parties can evolve something to avoid this division of votes and several contestants and Parties.

Q: In view of your coming out from the Janata Party on the communal issue, do you visualise the possibility of all former Congressmen from other Parties coming together to form a solid block of ex-Congressmen?

A: Well, there is, I think... I would put it, not immediately, but in the course of time. Not immediately.

Q: Do you think it would have been better if you had come out of the Janata Party immediately after the mid-term election results were known without so much of mudslinging we witnessed during the last two and a half months?

A: Well, it would have been better. But I did not want at that time to take any step merely on gossips and rumours unless I was myself convinced that a part of the rumour was correct.

Q: You have said that you did not leave the Janata Party in the midst of the elections because that would have been unethical. The question being asked is whether it was ethical for you to have left the Congress in 1977 in the midst of the

I do not think Suresh Kumar will have a big say in the new Party.

elections?

A: 1977 was not a comparable year on any account and in 1977 when I left, nobody was sure that the Janata Party was going to win... It was a grave risk that I had taken but there are all sorts of people today who can be made to write all sorts of things. I have seen one of the columnists writing that in 1977 I made calculations before I left...

Q: What do you think of the credibility of Indian politicians in general?

A: Well, the last two years has been a period of uncertainty, equivocation and generally of non-performance in several fields and if people are angry, that is quite justifiable.

Q: Do you think Suresh Kumar will have a big say in the new Party you propose to form?

A: I don't think so. The thing that Suresh has been doing, in the case of others might have brought him praise. He was offered a minister'ship in Bihar in Mr Gafoor's Cabinet. And even without consulting me he declined to accept it at a point when the invitation was given to him for the swearing-in ceremony. When the parliamentary board decided in 1977 to give him a ticket for Rajya Sabha, he declined at that time. This year, many people wanted him to contest a seat for the Lok Sabha but he declined. All these things should have brought praise in the case of sons of others. But because he happens to be my friend—my son—and there are interested parties to malign me, he also is maligned without any justification. His credentials are these. In the 1977 elections, Suresh Kumar worked very hard for the success of the Janata Party, and without any reward. Then somebody complained that he was against my joining the Ministry. If he was against his father joining the Morarji Ministry, it should go to his credit, not to his discredit. All these things. How many sons are there to persuade their fathers not to join a Ministry?

Q: I have been seeing you Babuji for so many years right from my cub reporter days. Are you confident of leading a new Party?

A: Today this country stands in need of a political Party which, as I have said earlier, stands for democracy and will not permit any infringement of the democratic norms. The Party should be secular, secular not in the accepted sense that it should not be communal. In the complicated social structure of this country, casteism is a factor which should be reckoned with. Such a party should be free from caste as well as communal bias. Ours is a poor country. Socialism can only ensure to the vast masses, labouring classes, a status in society and adequate reward for their labour. We have to restore the dignity of labour which was there at one time in our own country. Labour was not only respected but even worshipped.

"Dual membership can't be put in cold storage"

The Janata Party president CHANDRA SHEKHAR told AJJOY BOSE

Q HOW do you see the developments in the Janata Party in the past few weeks?

A: Quite disturbing. I did not expect that these developments would take place after such a crushing defeat. It is human nature that at a time of calamity or (in a) adverse position people try to cling together and face the challenges unitedly. But there are certain people within the Party who cannot resolve their differences. This can only be explained as an excuse for some people to get away from the Party—that is the only explanation I have. I don't understand the logic behind their attitudes. The only logic is that they want some pretext to leave the Party.

Q: There is a feeling that you are the only link holding a disintegrating Party together. How long do you think you can do so?

A: I don't think this would be a correct analysis. The fact is that it is not a disintegrating Party. This Party was never united or cohesive in the past. Many elements came together after the Emergency and luckily they got power—I think (that) was the uniting factor. Now that there is no power, in the face of defeat, all of them are feeling frustrated. Well not all of them, but many of them are feeling frustrated. They are fighting against each other. But I am not the only link, there are many workers who are determined to continue their fight against authoritarianism and they are the real source of strength of the Janata Party. Individuals are important, but they are not as important as you presume them to be.

Q: You mean that if certain individuals leave the Party, it will help the Party to be cohesive?

A: I can't tell you about the individuals, but people who don't (have) their hearts (in) running the Party, who do not have the patience and endurance to face the difficult days, leave the Party. That really does not add to the problems of the Party but in many ways solves the problems of the Party. If you are facing a difficult period, there is no point in frittering away your energy in fighting against each other.

Q: If Babuji leaves the Party, would it help in making a more cohesive Janata Party?

A: I can't say. Just by Babuji leaving the Party, you can't make the Janata Party more cohesive. For this you have to go through a period of struggle. You have to go a long way to make the Party cohe-

sive. Only Jagjivan Ram going out will not solve the situation. There are other factions which (can) make problems in the Party. I don't think some individuals going out or some individuals coming in will make the Party more united.

Q: Has the dual membership issue been put in the cold storage for the moment?

A: It can't be put into cold storage. It has become a live issue. Both sides have taken rigid attitudes. There are people who have real apprehensions about the functioning of the RSS. This is nothing new. They have had these apprehensions in the past. In the beginning, I tried to strike a compromise on that issue and if you remember in July, 1979 when the split was there, I met Balasaheb Deoras. I was coming from Madras and he was kind enough to come to Nagpur airport and we had a brief talk for 20 minutes. I tried to persuade him that this has created an apprehension in the minds of certain people and why doesn't he himself say that those who are Members of the Legislature or Parliament or office-bearers of the Janata Party will not take part in the activities of the RSS. He agreed to that formulation and he said at that time that if I made such an announcement he would not have any objection because the power was there and everybody was trying to find some solution to the problem.

Now the same solution was suggested at the recent national executive, and unfortunately, our Jana Sangh friends, I mean former Jana Sangh friends, took a very rigid posture. Later they made some gesture that they were ready to

think over it but it was as if it was a great concession they were bestowing upon some friends in order to save the Party. But at this moment if they go on saying that their first loyalty is to the RSS and only their political loyalty is to the Janata Party, it becomes very difficult to know where is the line between political loyalty and their loyalty to the RSS. That is the apprehension in the minds of certain people. So unless and until there is some desire on both sides to strike a compromise, I think it will go on agitating the minds of the people and will go on creating trouble for the Party. I don't think that the dual membership can be put in the cold storage. A decision will have to be taken this way or that.

Q: I believe that there have been a number of complaints by Janata Party members that the RSS worked against the Party. Why did these people expect the RSS to work for them in the first place?

A: They should not have. That was wrong on their part. This is what I told them. If you want the RSS to be delinked from the Party, why should they also want the RSS to work for them? That was a ridiculous position. I don't understand the mind of these people. That is why I say even these people are not quite serious about their stand on the RSS. But I am ready to give concessions to these people for such frivolous attitudes to this issue. I think that this problem will remain because you know, the RSS is no ordinary organisation. It is very highly organised institution and they have a day-to-day function everywhere. Whether they have an impact on the society, right or wrong, whether the apprehensions are genuine or not, I shall not go into that. So it is bound to agitate the minds of people at every crucial moment. This thing should be cleared up—that is what I feel.

Q: Why do you think the former Jana Sangh leaders are not ready to snap their links with the RSS?

A: The whole thing is that there is a feeling among people that the RSS is an organisation of a band of workers. Everybody wants to utilise their services for political advantage. Whether they belong to the erstwhile Jana Sangh or they don't, everybody wants to cash in on the organised capacity of the RSS. But when the question comes of the apprehension in the minds of the minorities that has been created because of the long history of the RSS, they have not been able to swallow that. That is the whole problem. They want to take the advantage but they are not ready to take the odium of what the RSS has been known in the country for such a long time.



TATU CHAKRABARTY

Did JP clear the RSS ?

By BHOLA CHATTERJI

IF the Jana Sangh faithful is a "fascist", then I too am a fascist": who could have possibly said that way back in early 1975? Particularly, when the Jana Sangh was wont to make a fetish of its anti-secular-obscurantist-authoritarian pontifical ideology? Who else but a morbidly, communalist Hindu, you would probably say in retort. Well, you may be guessed wrong. It was none other than Jayaprakash Narayan who made that statement. This, according to the March 6, 1975 issue of the *Motherland*, the Jana Sangh mouthpiece, was what JP said while addressing the 20th annual conference of the Jana Sangh held in New Delhi.

To get the point one has only to refer to the not so distant past. In his presidential address to the Second National Convention Against Communalism on December 28-29, 1968 JP said: "India being a country of many religions, almost every religious community has its own brand of communalism. They are all pernicious, but Hindu communalism is more pernicious than the others...Hindu communalism can easily masquerade as Indian nationalism and denounce all opposition to it as being anti-national...Some like the Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh might do it openly by identifying the Indian nation with Hindu Rashtra...When the Sangh (RSS) was under a shadow after Gandhiji's murder there were many protestations about its being entirely a cultural organisation. But apparently emboldened by the timidity of the secular forces it has thrown its veil away and has emerged as the real power behind, and controller of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. The secular protestations of the Jana Sangh will never be taken seriously unless it cuts the bonds which tie it so firmly to the RSS machine. Nor can the RSS be treated as a cultural organization so long as it remains the mentor and effective manipulator of a political party."

He did not let the matter rest here. Referring to the "RSS itself", JP observed that "if it has the good of India at heart it should convert itself from a narrowminded Hindu organization to a broadbased Indian organization and admit into its ranks the young from all communities and train them to be disciplined, loyal and united citizens of India. They (RSS) would earn the gratitude of India if they did that, but if they persist in their present politics and happen to make headway they will most certainly kill the soul of Hindu Dharma and sap the foundations of the nation." Needless to say, JP was not oblivious to the mischief potential of other facets of the pro-

blem of communalism. In the course of the same speech he said: "I have time only for one more religious communalism, that of Muslim communalism. Certain facts of Indian history and misinterpretations of Islam, coupled with reaction to Hindu communalism, have produced a type of Muslim communalism that is becoming a danger both to the Muslims themselves and to the country. There is one body that I would like to identify particularly as a source of such danger—I mean the Jamaat-e-Islami." At the same time, JP wanted it to be clearly understood that minority communalism was not only a response to Hindu communalism but also would grow in volume "if Hindu Rashtra and not Bharatiya Rashtra becomes the goal of the predominant Hindu community".

Between then and 1975 the country had changed and, with it JP's diagnosis of the malady. As he put it in *Prison Diary*, "The country is heading for a downfall, not only moral but also the economic, social and cultural degradation of at least 40 per cent of the Indian people who live below the poverty line. One is reminded here of a statement of Renu who, while defining democracy, had said that it did not only mean a government established by the people's vote; it also meant that the people had the power to oust their rulers when found unworthy to rule. Democracy has almost ceased to exist in India today. The pyramid of the political structure still stands on its apex. The same is true of the educational and almost all other spheres of public activity. It is a tragic story that beggars description."

JP was almost persuaded that the alchemy of struggle would bring about a qualitative change in the ideas and attitudes of the political parties. Anticipating the question whether the participation of opposition political parties in his movement was "an unmixed evil," JP said: "My unhesitating answer is No. Its first result...is that it lends strength to the movement. But the more important thing is that the parties undergo a sea-change in the process. True, this would not happen in a State where there is no strong non-party leadership in the movement. But in Bihar it has happened. All the parties involved are committed to the aims of total revolution and to the dynamics of change: struggle." Even as he said this he had grave doubts about the wisdom of taking to the course that he did. He could well realise that this involved the complex issue of ends and means, that the ideal he had set himself was hardly compatible with the tool he was obliged to use. That in a way explains why he said that "the ideal never gets translated into practice without suffering deterioration". Taking one

thing with another, one cannot avoid drawing the conclusion that the compulsion of events left JP with no alternative to putting a premium on expediency. Circumstances alter cases and JP, who had all along insisted on sticking to the straight path of principled politics and whose major preoccupation had been the question of ends and means, seemed to have veered round to the point that a lesser evil could be employed to get to grips with a greater evil: "the Congress monopoly of power at the Centre".

But it did not take long for him to realise that he was mistaken in his reckoning. Immediately after the March 1977 parliamentary election it became quite clear that the period of sweet reasonableness was over. The succession of events confirmed that the RSS had not changed a whit, that it was determined to throw a spanner into the works. Much sooner than most others had expected, JP woke up to the fact that his concept of total revolution would be reduced to a mockery if the Janata Party continued to associate itself with any variety of communalism.

Soon after his return from the US, where he had gone for medical treatment, JP stated in unadorned language that the RSS was a malignant growth in the body politic of the country. In an interview to *Samayika Varta*, a weekly, on September 13, 1977 JP said that the RSS had no justification to continue its separate existence "in the changed circumstances". Speaking in the same vein he observed: "In the course of my contact with RSS leaders as well as cadres, I have noticed a change in their outlook. They no longer have a feeling of animosity toward other communities. But in their heart of hearts they still believe in the concept of Hindu Rashtra."

That said, he advised the RSS to "disband itself and merge with the youth and cultural organizations of the Janata Party". If that was not possible the RSS should at least "open its doors to members of all communities, including Muslims and Christians, and make it possible for members of all castes and communities, including Harijans, Muslims and Christians, to hold the highest office in the organization". He also suggested that the RSS front organisations should join the Janata Party's front organisations. "If this is not done," JP warned, "there will be great potential for discord and conflict in future". And he reminded the RSS people that he had hopes that "they will give up the concept of Hindu Rashtra and adopt in its place that of Indian nationhood, which is a secular concept and embraces all communities living in India". His hopes, however, withered away much before he went the way of all flesh. ■

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ANGLO-INDIANS



The forgotten community

By DAVID McMAHON

A COUPLE of centuries ago, according to legend, one of my ancestors who was then an Irish citizen, decided that the Emerald Isle was not good enough for him. So he sold his property lock, stock and barrel and used the profits to pay for his passage out to India which was for him a wonderful land of polo, sahibs, sundowners and Hindoos. Although there is a parallel line of thought which suggests that he was evicted from Ireland because he was a sheep thief, no one has ever been able to prove this intriguing theory. He liked India, stayed on and raised a family which later intermarried. Thus his descendants—my ancestors—became known as Anglo-Indians, or people of European descent in the male line whose parents were habitual residents of India.

It is not difficult to discover why Europeans, or, more specifically, Britishers, of that time were so prone to intermarriage. In the early days of the East India Company there were very few Englishwomen here in India and so even in a large settlement like Madras, tedium was the order of the day and the only thing to look forward to was the weekly Sunday dinner. A writer in the Calcutta Review of 1845 describes these men as "desperate adventurers... who sought the golden shores of the East to repair their broken fortunes. They cheated, they gambled, they drank, they revelled in all kinds of debauchery". Burke, however, thought differently. "There is nothing worse in the boys we send to India, than in the boys we are whipping at school, or whom we see trailing over a pike, or bending over a desk at home," he affirmed.

However he may have been, he was denied the company of women of his own race since the regulations of the East India Company forbade Englishwomen sharing the risks and privations of their men. They therefore wasted no time in moaning about their fortunes and accordingly chose their partners from the women of the land. Such marriages were considered respectable and they continued, although with decreasing frequency, until the Renewal of the Company's Charter in 1833, when the existing regulations about residence in India except by servants of the Company were withdrawn. The opening of the overland route via the Suez Canal made the trip out to India infinitely less tedious, with the anticipated result that there was a great influx of Englishmen and women into this country. At around this time two novel terms came into being: One was the "fishing fleet" and the other was "return empties". The former referred to the droves of women who left England and came to India with the sole intention of hooking husbands, while the latter, predictably, referred to those unlucky maidens who failed in their endeavours and had to return to their homeland. One charge that has been frequently—and often maliciously—levelled



against the Anglo-Indian community is that it retains the characteristics, manners and lifestyle of the British. The reason for this is fairly simple. The British husband found it easier, call it laziness if you like, to teach his Indian wife the English language than to pick up her vernacular. Thus the English language, customs and practices became the dominant strain in such families and they have retained this character even today. It is difficult to find a member of the community who can speak a national language with any degree of proficiency. There are some notable exceptions, of course, but they are few.

There are still others who speak of England as being "home", regardless of whether they have ever set foot on English soil or not. My closest friend in school had been born and bred in Calcutta but he never really thought of the city as being home. To him, it was a surrogate hometown and I always suspected that he secretly dreamt of London, although he had only been there once, as a child, and probably could remember nothing about the city. During the 1971 Indian tour of England and the historic victory of the tourists under Ajit Wadekar we used to follow the series very closely. During the day we used to scan the school notice boards for the latest scores and at night we used to sink into a friendly prefect's room to follow the Tests on his radio. The fall of an English wicket would send us into soundless jigs for joy (soundless because we risked having our pocket money docked if we were caught) but he would sit alone in agony. After India had clinched the series, a number of us pulled his leg about whether he wanted to revert to Indian citizenship.

Scratch most members of the Anglo-Indian community and you find a person whose first love is sport. The noted sports commentator, A. F. S. Talyarkhan, writing in the *Times of India* in 1968 said "India's hockey grew thanks to the greatest hockey-playing entity the world will ever know: the Anglo-Indian community of the country". This is more than true. In 1926 an Indian Army hockey team which was about to depart to New Zealand played a practice match against an impromptu Anglo-Indian team from the North-western Railway. The carefully selected Army team was well and truly trounced. Two years later, at the Olympics, the Indian hockey team swept aside all opposition, scoring 23 goals against their opponents without conceding even one. Of the 11 playing members, eight were Anglo-Indians, while the manager and two of the three reserves also belonged to the community. It would not be out of place to add that this Olympic team had been beaten by a scratch Anglo-Indian team from Bombay. Leslie Claudius, who represented India at four successive Olympic Games, was described as one of the greatest half-backs the world has ever seen. His son Robert, affectionately known as "Ebbay" had just re-

turned to Calcutta after participating in the World Cup hockey tournament at Buenos Aires when he was tragically killed in a scooter accident.

It is interesting that today no one pokes more fun at the Anglo-Indian community than the Anglo-Indians themselves. And we have one man in particular to thank for this ability to laugh at our own faults. This man is no longer in Calcutta, but in the long years he spent here, Ken Stewart was a hallmark in the city. A marriage was never the same if Ken was not around; we tried to postpone our christenings if the proposed date did not suit him; no club function was ever a success if he was not the Master of Ceremonies.

It wasn't that Ken thought there was anything wrong with Anglo-Indians—he was a staunch one himself ("A thick one" he described himself, using a favourite phrase of the community). But it was he who taught us that there is no essential difference between the various strata within the community. Ken was no preacher but his message was always the same—"Smile, things are never quite as bad as they seem". His jokes are still told at parties by people who try and pass them off as their own but the one I like best was related to me by Mr. Neil O'Brien, the Anglo-Indian MLA from West Bengal and the butt of the joke in this case. He had given Ken a lift home one evening and the latter did not miss the opportunity to quip "How many people can claim to have an MLA for a driver?" Ken was a wonderful mimic and always had his audiences in splits of laughter with his acts though, according to a general consensus, his imitation of a tailor (the inevitable "durzee" to every Anglo-Indian family) was the one that cornered the most laughs. It was the same act over and over again but it never failed to delight his fans. He would appear dressed for all the world like a harassed tailor, with a long shirt over a checked lungi, a measuring tape draped untidily around his neck and the usual bundle of clothes over his shoulder. Then he would launch off into a long tirade against those imaginary customers who gave him the most trouble. It is ample proof of the rapport between Ken and the rest of the community that his victims always laughed loudest at the jokes.

It was not long before Ken's brand of humour brushed off on the rest of the community. Soon everyone began cracking jokes about Nizam's and their famous "kathi" rolls which have somehow become synonymous with the Anglo-Indian community. The "kathi" shop became the focal point for a "gup" or the Anglo-Indian equivalent of a chat. The latest "khabbar" was who had "labjao-ed" (hacked, as in kite-flying) whose girlfriend, or who had been putting on a lot of "kunni" (another allusion to kite-flying, meaning putting on airs and graces). It was a sad day for the com-

munity when Ken announced that he was leaving the country for good and the resultant "Ken Stewart Farewell Show" was sold out well in advance. No hall could possibly have accommodated the number of people who wanted to say goodbye to Ken and so the organisers decided on an outdoor musical festival at La Martiniere School. It was a stifling hot summer evening but every chair was occupied an hour before the concert began and thousands who could not find their places stood for seven hours, from five in the evening till midnight, till the last notes of the music had died away. One of the most touching moments came when Ken was overcome by emotion during his farewell speech and could only blink the tears from his eyes while thousands of his friends chered him as they had never cheered before. Usha Uthup, the famous singer who has always held a special place in Calcutta's heart, hugged Ken and



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Roger Binny, the Anglo-Indian Test all-rounder from Bangalore

burst into song, but after a few bars her voice broke and then it was only the band that played on in the growing darkness.

CHRISTMAS for the community is without a doubt the greatest time of the year. It is a time for new clothes, for family reunions, for listening to Christmas carols on cold nights. It is a time for joyous celebration, for gathering around Christmas trees in living rooms, decorated with tinsel and imitation snow. It is a time to go out carol singing in groups and to hear the haunting notes of carols like "Silent Night"; it is the season for milk punch and homemade wine, for grandmother's cakes and plum pudding, for kulkuls (one wonders at the origins of such a name) and rose cookies. For the ladies it is an opportunity to try and lift a good recipe from a neighbour. Each family has its own recipe, handed down from generation to generation, for the traditional Christmas cakes. Often these recipes are closely guarded secrets and so it is very rare to find two cakes in different households that taste the same.

The Anglo-Indian is gregarious by his very nature; it is in his blood. He places great stress on the practice of visiting friends and relatives, while clubs too form an integral part of his lifestyle. The club to him represents a home away from home; there are three typically Anglo-Indian clubs in Calcutta alone and each one perhaps is a legend in its own right. The first is the Grail Club on Park Street, which still has a very high percentage of Anglo-Indian members. The second is the Rangers Club, founded in 1896, which gained fame through sport, its dances and its well run Sweep which enabled the club to donate lavishly to various charities.

The most famous of the three is the Dalhousie Institute, affectionately referred to as the DI and sometimes

as "The Lousy Institute". It was founded on the site of what is today Telephone Bhavan but the club premises were later shifted to Jhowtalla Road. Although it is in no way a club exclusively for members of the Anglo Indian community, there is a spirit about it which is very difficult to describe and which the members refer to as the "family feeling". It is a place for everyone, young and old alike, with its tennis courts, swimming pool, billiard tables, table tennis tables and of course a well-stocked bar. Social functions at these clubs are ample evidence of this family feeling and no such function is ever complete without a dance. It is always more than likely that, even if a dance has not been scheduled, there will be one by the time the show is over. And if the music is not loud enough, it doesn't really matter, because everyone will chip in with a bit of singing. The popularity of the Dalhousie Institute is always most in evidence at the traditional New Year dance, when the tables are crammed to capacity and it is not just the cold that causes the couples on the floor to dance a little closer. And on the stroke of midnight, the musical chimes strike twelve and the problems of the past year never seem further away as hundreds of voices break into "Auld Lang Syne".

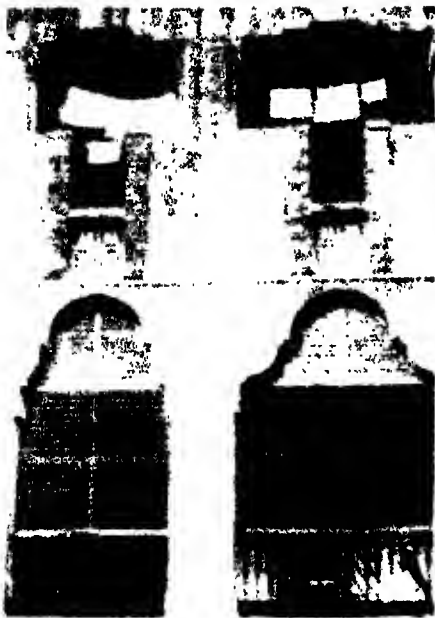
THE railway colonies were once a focal point of Anglo-Indian life and the premier of these was the one at Kharagpur, a two-hour drive from Calcutta. We heard our fathers speak in glowing terms of the sporting life in the township, of the fabulous dances that used to be held at the railway institute there, and of the hospitality that was so legendary. But the Kharagpur of today is very different from the one our fathers knew and loved. Apart from the distinction of having the longest railway platform in the country, there is little else of interest there. The township is laid out in



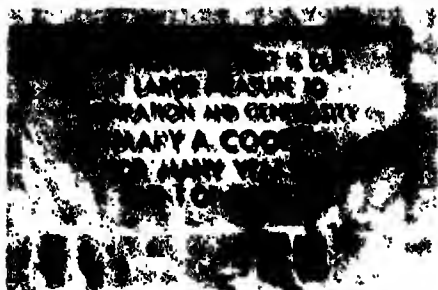
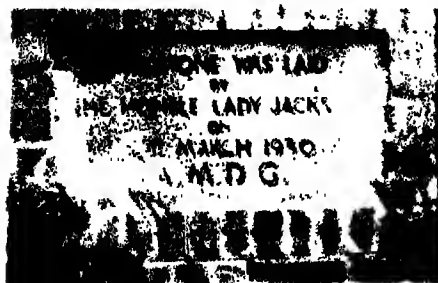
Leslie Claudius, the only man in the world to represent his country at four successive Olympic Games

neat squares, the boundaries of which are narrow tarred roads that are surprisingly smooth. Very little traffic traverses these roads, apart from the occasional bus or cycle rickshaw. There are the old bungalows by the side of the roads, each with its own plot of dry land that was once a garden.

Age has begun to show. The railway institute, the scene of so many wonderful functions, is now derelict and is scheduled to be pulled down. The bandstand where once, not so long ago, brass bands played regularly, has not seen a coat of paint for many years. "There have been more changes here", Mr Rupert Wainwright told me, "more perhaps than I can ever describe to you. This used to be a thriving colony, a happy colony once upon a time, with plenty of social life, but most of the Anglo-Indians have left now". There is no bitterness in his voice, only a trace of resignation and nostalgia. He knits his brows as he tries to explain what he means. "Our children are the ones that suffer here, so a lot of them go to Calcutta to work. They stay there in hostels and come and visit us whenever they can. Even those who opt for college must leave here and go to Calcutta so you can realise what a deep sense of loneliness there is here. I have a daughter who is working in Calcutta, a son who is studying there and one daughter is working as a nurse in Patna. My other daughter and two other sons are still with me as they are still of school-going age." Mr Wainwright, who was a member of the BNR (Bengal Nagpur Railway) hockey team that won the Beighton Cup many years ago, suddenly looked very tired when I asked him about sport in the colony. "We once had the finest talent in the country here in this colony, but all that has changed now." He smiled suddenly and said "You must be getting tired of that phrase



A view of the Mary Cooper Home from within the courtyard



by now, but it is a fact. Our Anglo-Indian boys—the few that are left here now—will find it difficult to attain the standard and proficiency in sport that people of my generation did. This is not to say that they do not have the same interest or aptitude, but there are just not enough of them left”.

What he said is true, although a team of Kharagpur boys acquitted themselves well two years ago in the inter-railway tournament. I watched a few of them at a practice session at the colony's stadium. The game clearly meant more to them than the blazing afternoon heat but they did not quit their tireless running and dribbling till the shadows began to lengthen. While they tried to outwit each other, the sweat dripping off their brows, I noticed a middle-aged gentleman sitting about twenty yards away from me, watching the game

intently. I mistook him for a resident of the town, so I walked up and began talking to him. Jerry Lonneaux, I discovered in the course of the conversation, was indeed Kharagpur-born although he now stays in Calcutta. He was more philosophical about the changes that had taken place. “Yes, it has changed unbelievably, but then that again is only to be expected, isn't it? Still, it does come as a bit of a shock to see how this place has altered. I come here every year with my old mother. We spend about a month here and I always see more changes with each visit. The whole place is so different from the colony I remember.”

“The day will come” he told me as he stubbed out his cigarette and slowly exhaled with what seemed to be a sigh of sorrow, “when there will not be a single Anglo-Indian left here. The older ones will die, their children will move on because there will be no future for them here.” Teenager Vernon Wainwright echoed a similar sentiment that evening when I sounded him out in an attempt to grasp the problems of the youngsters in the colony. “I am not ashamed to be an Anglo-Indian,” he told me, “but I'm willing to face facts. The education here is all right up to a certain level but I will do my college in Calcutta and stay on there to work. Personally, I feel that the era of the Anglo-Indian railway colonies has come to a close.”

WITH the death of the railway colonies, the centre of Anglo-Indian life is Calcutta, in which city is represented every section of the community, from the poorest at Tiljala to those who occupy the posts of executives in various firms. They are spread out all over the city, although there are some areas which are practically mini-colonies for the community. But the community is diminishing in this city as well and there are considerably less Anglo-Indians now than there were, say, ten years ago. Many have migrated, either to England or Australia: the

The cement goblin and ragoon



vast majority to the latter country. In some cases whole families have left; in others individuals packed up their bags and tried to make a new life for themselves in other countries. Some have made their fortunes, some have not but the community continues to thrive out considerably.

My eldest brother Keith migrated to Australia ten years ago, and short



ly after he was granted Australian citizenship, he came out on a visit to India. His new nationality led to quite an incongruous situation when he came to see me in Darjeeling, where I was in school. When my brother decided to extend his stay in the hill station, he had to take special permission, as a foreign national, in order to do so. My mother, one of my other brothers and I accompanied him to the authorities. One of them sanctioned his extension without any delay and then asked my mother if she would allow him to ask her just one question out of curiosity. My mother said yes, although she did look a little puzzled. “Madam” said the bemused official, “how is it that you have two Indian sons and one Australian son?”

As a result of mass migration, there are cases where children leave the country one by one, until the parents are left alone, with nothing to look forward to after retirement except perhaps a meagre pension and a bleak little flat. To this end there is an essentially Anglo-Indian innovation: the home for the aged. In the absence of a joint family system, such institutions guarantee a roof over the heads of those who no longer have a means of supporting themselves. For a very nominal sum they are cared for, fed and nursed at these homes. In case they do not have the money to pay, there are certain trust funds that provide the money. The atmosphere at these places is a poor substitute for the family life that these elderly folks have been denied, or conversely, that they can no longer afford. But they have the satisfaction of knowing that all their needs will be taken care of and most of all that they do not

Photographs on this page by Bipul Guha

have to face the loneliness and alienation that is almost always linked with old age.

THE Mary Cooper Home for the Aged in Calcutta is well maintained and preserved. The lawns are neatly cropped, the two-storeyed building is kept immaculately clean and the brass fittings sparkle. As one enters there is a colour photograph of Queen Elizabeth, one that must have been taken many years ago. The corridors are sunny and clean. Outside, in the grassy courtyard there is a birdpond with a pigeon drinking out of it. Nearby there is a goblin in colourful clothes, complete with cap and butterfly net and it is only at this stage that one does a double-take and realises that both the goblin and the pigeon are fashioned from cement. Both are the creations of one of the inmates of the home, a Mr Nelson, who died many years ago and whose wife used to look on my three brothers and me as her sons until she died early last year.

She used to tell us stories about life at the home whenever she used to spend the day at our house. "They are very good to us," she would say, "but at the same time it can be difficult to get on with everyone. All of us are getting on in years and we all have our own idiosyncracies which do not always suit others. So there is sometimes friction but on the whole we are as happy as we can be in such a situation. Certainly we get all the attention we want." Sometimes, when she was worried or preoccupied, her outlook was different. One day, when she was particularly gloomy, she told us "You know, the worst thing about being in a home like this is that you know it is the final stage of your life. You shift into a room which you sometimes have to share. Maybe you linger on for a year, maybe five, maybe ten; but you know that your days are numbered. You know that you are going to die and it will only be a matter of time. When someone here dies, everyone wonders whose turn it is going to be next, but no one discusses it in the open."

WHEREVER there have been Anglo-Indians, there have been flowers, a truth that exists even today. Flowers were very much a part of my childhood, when our sprawling lawns were ablaze in winter with sweetpeas, cannas and beds of some of the most massive dahlias I have ever seen. One of my most vivid memories relates to the Winter of the Queen's Dahlia. My father was determined that his prize dahlia be entered in a flower show which Queen Elizabeth, on a visit to India, was to judge. So it was that a huge white beauty became known as the Queen's Dahlia. No one was allowed within a five yard radius and all games in the vicinity were naturally taboo. The Queen's Dahlia grew and prospered and everyone breathed easier as the great day drew nearer. But one of my brothers, a pugnacious



southpaw named Brian, who must have been about twelve years old then, hit a sizzling four during a game of cricket which unfortunately snapped the stem of the Queen's Dahlia. No one spoke, which was understandable in view of the gravity of the situation. I was too young then to be included in the proceedings but I do remember that my brother Mike found a piece of thin, very strong wire and carried out instant surgery so that the Queen's Dahlia stood proud once again. That evening however I forgot my enforced vow of silence and chattily told my father what had happened. I don't recall what took place after that, but I do

remember that it was a long time before I was allowed to play cricket with my brothers again.

But the flowers, which have always meant so much to Anglo-Indian families throughout India, have withered away. The once immaculately trimmed hedges are now dusty and ragged while the lawns are overgrown with weeds. The Anglo-Indians are a sadly depleted community today. Those that remain on in India live on memories of days gone by. A festival or a celebration is never the same without those members of families who have left the shores of the country for ever; without the friends who are now thous-

ands or miles away. It is a sad community which has more or less resigned itself to the fact that it faces extinction in the not-too distant future. Anglo-Indian representation in Parliament is scheduled to come to an end in 1981, despite the best efforts of men like Frank Anthony, and a number of brows are furrowed with apprehension. Those who prefer to quit the country will grab the first chance they get; those who stay on will see their children intermarry.

It will not be very long before there is nothing left of the Anglo-Indian community except legends and old, dog-eared photographs.

Torn between two worlds

I AM an Anglo-Indian and proud to be one. All that has to be said about this minority community has been, perhaps, touched upon in the books by Herbert Stark, Frank Anthony, Reginald Maher and others. I have no pretensions to add to their contributions on the history of the Anglo-Indians. Leaders like Sir Henry Gidney, Frank Anthony and A. E. T. Barrow, helped by others of lesser stature, gained recognition and constitutional guarantees for their community from the Government of India after the country gained Independence.

The Anglo-Indian is a product of a union between East and West. For over a century we were referred to as Eurasians, half-castes and country-born. Our women were looked down on as *chhee chhee*. These descriptions all have derogatory connotations. Sir Henry Gidney's efforts resulted in establishing a nomenclature more in keeping with the union between East and West and the Anglo-Indian has been clearly and unambiguously defined in the Government of India Act of 1935 Article 366 (2): "An Anglo-Indian means a person whose father or any of whose male progenitors in the male line is or was of European descent but who is domiciled within the territory of India and is or was born within such territory of parents habitually resident therein and not established there for temporary purposes only."

The Calcutta Police Force formerly provided gainful employment to very large numbers of the community but today the picture is very different. One can practically count them on one's fingers. The Railways, Customs, Post and Telegraphs, Licensed Measurers, Port Commissioners and large mercantile firms were all served by the Anglo-Indians to a very great extent, but now their almost total absence is all too noticeable.

Take a look at the playing fields

By COLIN McMAHON

in schools and on the Maidan. The Rangers Club was the only Anglo-Indian club in this city that could field two full and equally competent teams in football, hockey and cricket. All these sides could hold their own against the best available, not only in Calcutta but also from outside the city. Today's story makes very sad reading. The club's social activities were once the talk of the town—they still are, but not in the same terms.

THE services still have their nucleus of the Anglo-Indians who continue to make a name for themselves in the Rolls of Honour. Members of the community acquitted themselves honourably in both confrontations with Pakistan and perhaps even today some Anglo-Indian names remain household words. There were the Keelor brothers, then Squadron Leaders, who literally exploded the myth

of the invincible Sabres used against us by the Pakistanis. Both brothers, Trevor and Denzil, shot down a Sabre each while flying Gnats, which were till then considered inferior to the F86 Sabres. No less than them were heroes like Wing Commander William MacDonald Goodman—whose Mystere pilots wreaked havoc against the opposing forces—and fliers like Tony Mousinho and Group Captain Lloyd. Lt. General Pat Dunne, who gained so much fame, was an Anglo-Indian too.

A question that appears pertinent to me is why the Anglo-Indians left this country in their thousands after Independence. Were they unmindful of the community's glorious past? Why has the community failed to respond to the Indian Government's generous attitude to them, and what has happened to their sense of loyalty? In spite of the oppression of the British for over a century, thousands have migrated to the British Isles and thousands more to the Dominions. Entire families who migrated did not always go to the same destination and very often part families remained on in India. Why did the Anglo-Indian Association at the Centre fail to tackle this problem properly and why did the West Bengal Branch actively help in accelerating this exodus?

Two very far-reaching consequences stem from this mass migration. The community has reached its lowest ebb and faces extinction in possibly a hundred years from now. Avenues for employment are being restricted not by unwillingness on the part of employees but by the fear that the Anglo-Indian is a time server and will leave as soon as it is convenient for him to do so. In spite of rigid immigration rules in Britain and the Commonwealth countries, coupled with stringent financial rules governing money that can be taken out of the country, the Anglo-Indian is still leaving.



An Opposition divided



CAN the Opposition put up a joint fight against the Congress (I) during the next Assembly elections?

To me, it seems to be almost impossible. Though they are all aware that no single Opposition Party can defeat the Congress (I) in any of the States and though it is clear even to a child that only a united Opposition can put up some strong resistance to Mrs Gandhi, it would still be stupid to expect the Opposition to close their ranks. The Opposition is now more divided than it was during the Lok Sabha elections. And, I am afraid, they will be further divided in the coming months.

The truth is that apart from the CPI(M) no Opposition Party is too keen on putting up a joint fight against Mrs Gandhi. The CPI(M) has proposed one Opposition candidate in all the constituencies. Not a joint front as such—only an adjustment of seats. But the CPI(M) is no force in those nine States. The dominant forces in those States are the Janata Party and the Lok Dal. And the situation within these two Parties is so confusing at the moment and personal relations between the top leaders of these two Parties are so bitter that they cannot be expected to complete the difficult and complicated task of adjustment in about one thousand Assembly constituencies.

The Opposition can broadly be divided into five groups: the Jana Sanghes and the RSS men, the old Congress people and the opportunists, the non-Communist Left, the pro-Moscow "progressives" and the CPI(M). The Jana Sanghes and RSS men belong mostly to the Janata Party. The old Congress people and opportunists are in the Congress (U), Janata Party and the Lok Dal. The non-Communist Leftists are in the Janata, Lok Dal, Forward Bloc, RSP and PWP. The pro-Moscow progressives are in the CPI, Congress (U) and Lok Dal.

The Jana Sanghes and the RSS men are still the most organised Opposition political force in the country, though their mass base is not that strong. Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi still consider them to be their main adversaries. There are virtually three opinions within this Jana Sangh-RSS group. One group thinks that it should try to build up a broad anti-Mrs Gandhi front immediately and arrange an adjustment of seats with all the anti-Congress (I) forces. This group is headed by Atal Behari Vajpayee. The second group, headed by I. K. Advani,



By BARUN SENGUPTA

thinks "we should not hasten to forge an alliance again which may appear to be opportunistic and unworkable to the people". They would prefer to wait and allow all the anti-Mrs Gandhi forces to come closer during the process of a long struggle. The third group wants a dialogue with Mrs Gandhi and her son. They argue that with the presence of the Russians in Afghanistan and the threat of Pan-Islam, all patriotic Indians should come closer. They think Sanjay Gandhi is a patriotic Indian first and then everything else. This group is composed of some diehard RSS men.

The old Congressmen in the Opposition now can be divided into two groups—those who fought against Mrs Gandhi in 1969 and those who were with her till 1977. The first group is still bitter towards Mrs Gandhi, they want to stop her at all costs, but they think that no arrangement can work with a person like Charan Singh. So they do not want any adjustment with the Lok Dal. Some of the Congressmen who opposed Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi in the post-1977 period wanted a resolute and united fight against the mother and the son. They are not unwilling to join hands with the Jana Sanghes and the RSS men. Some others of this group are still bitterly opposed to the Jana Sangh and RSS and want a united front against the Congress (I) minus the Jana Sangh & RSS.

One can write page after page about the political opportunists in the Opposition today. One of the biggest opportunists on the Indian political scene today, Charan Singh, is strongly for a broad-based, anti-Indira front at the moment. He is no longer very anti-Jana Sangh and RSS. He is keen to join hands with the progressives and Leftists also. However, he has only one stipulation—he should be the leader of this front or adjustment. To the credit of this old man, it must be admitted that he is unafraid of CBI raids, unlike some of his senior former colleagues and has a strong personal base in UP and Haryana.

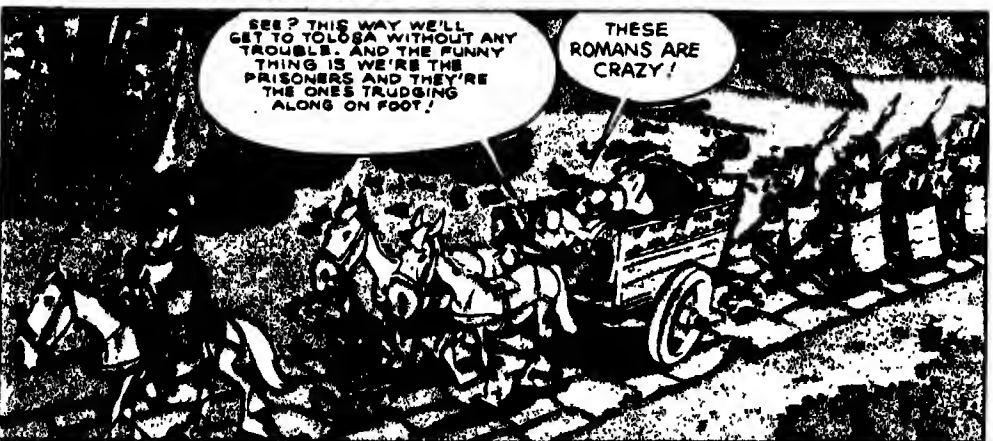
The other senior political opportunist of the country, Jagjivan Ram, is now playing the most disruptive role in the Opposition. The mother and the son are playing a game through him which can be compared with the game they played through Charan Singh and Raj Narain in 1979 to bring down the Janata Government. If Babuji can play the expected role successfully he may expect "a respected position in the Cabinet and immunity from this or that raid". But would not the example of Bahu-guna keep him under constant fear and uncertainty?

The non-communist Left is a small force composed of the former Socialists, PSP-men and other small Parties. All of them want a broad-based front against Mrs Gandhi and they are not allergic to anyone. But, they are not a major force and hence they cannot positively influence national politics very much. The pro-Moscow Communists and progressives are also no major political force of the country. But, with their tact, experience vital positions in different Parties, money power and generous support of the pro-Moscow Press, they play a vital role in all the political manoeuvrings in Delhi. Alas, they are also divided now! Some of them are anti-Mrs Gandhi while others support her. This difference of opinion on the tactical line of the group is expected to continue till clear "friendly advice" comes from abroad.

The major Left force of the country, the CPI(M), though trying to put up a bold face against Mrs Gandhi publicly and advocating a resolute united fight against her, is also trying to buy peace with her secretly. Two of their Politbureau members have met some persons close to Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay separately since the Lok Sabha polls and have pleaded "peaceful coexistence." But the Party as such does not trust her and if there is a joint front to stop Mrs Gandhi they would welcome the idea.

Needless to say, this complicated and confused situation in the Opposition suits Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay perfectly. If they cannot bring almost all the important state Governments under Congress (I) rule and if they cannot secure a two-thirds majority in the Rajya Sabha they cannot go ahead with all their plans and programmes "to strengthen the country". So, till they do that they will try to keep the Opposition divided. I have no doubt, some of the Opposition Parties and leaders will go on helping them in this task.





Introducing the Khasis

By PRADEEP DASGUPTA

SUB: Roy



Ward Lake, Shillong

MR J. N. CHOWDHURY's diligence in presenting a continuous narrative of the entire cultural and political history of the Khasis within the compass of a single volume is commendable. Any outsider seeking a broad knowledge about Khasis, one of the most advanced tribal communities of the country, will surely find the book immensely useful and interesting. The 426-page volume not only draws profusely on the accounts of all earlier writers on this and allied subjects, but also contains two illuminating articles by two noted literators of the Khasi-Pnar (Jaintia or Synteng) segment of Meghalaya. Mr Chowdhury, now above 60, has mostly lived in Shillong which is the hub of Khasi life as well as the State capital of Meghalaya. Besides, being associated with the Research Department of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh since its inception, he had access (which was "denied to or ignored by many Khasi writers", as pointed out by Mr S. J. Duncan in his foreword to the book) to all rare materials relevant to the subject of his study. All these undoubtedly make the treatise an authentic one, though its author

does not claim to have done very original research on the Khasis.

Geologists say that the beautiful hilly tract, inhabited by the colourful Khasi people and described as the "Scotland of the East", originated long before the emergence of the Himalayas. The Khasi-Pnar people are amongst the earliest migrants into the north-eastern region of India, but there are controversies about their origin. Like all other tribes, the Khasis have their own legends to say that they came down from the heaven with the help of a golden ladder and chose to remain on earth. However, according to Sir E. A. Gait, the Khasis are "a remnant of the first Mongolian overflow into India", whose language "is the only surviving dialect in India of the Mon-Khmer family of languages". But while there are no two opinions about the identity of the language, others differ with Gait about the ethnic origin of the Khasis. According to Rajmohan Nath (*Background of Assamese Culture*), for instance, the Khasis and the Syntengs owe their origins to the same racial stock called 'Besatis', as mentioned in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (first

century AD), which lived in the northern neighbourhood of Sumatra in a territory named "This". The Besatis people were Austric. Mr. Chowdhury believes that the Khasis are basically Austric, though they acquired some Mongoloid characters in the process of their migration in prehistoric time. He agrees too with E. T. Dalton in his observation that the Austric-speaking people, who steadfastly adhered to their ancient faith, also largely retained their original language.

Mr Chowdhury's comparative approach to the Khasi matriliney and his narratives on the Khasi dress, culture, arts and crafts and religion also make interesting reading. These are factual details narrated by earlier writers in their monographs and the author has hardly added anything to them. One would, though, have expected him to dilate elaborately on the "winds of change" which have affected Khasi society, particularly since the advent of the British in the hills and following independence, so much so that the Khasi people, in spite of the poverty of a large section of them in the rural areas and retention of some of their original social and cultural usages, can no longer be recognised as "tribals".

Writing his book, as he did, in late 1977, Mr Chowdhury could take a little more pains to further enrich and embellish the chapter on "political events" instead of stopping at the birth of the state of Meghalaya, in which the Khasis constitute a majority of the population. Indeed, the last two decades are a very important and significant chapter in the history of the Meghalayan people, more particularly the Khasis, and a depiction of the Khasi canvas remains incomplete without an elaborate coverage of the important developments of the Seventies as well as of the preceding decade. It was in the 70's that Assam's capital was shifted from Shillong, followed by the shifting of some important offices of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh and the Central Government as well, which must have had some impact on the economy of the Khasi Hills. But there is no reference to all these in book. Very recently Shillong and some other parts of the Khasi Hills witnessed serious violence. But why did this happen? The book fails to provide an understanding of the background of these happenings which must surely be there.

The Khasi Canvas, by J. N. Chowdhury, distributed by Chapala Book Stall, Shillong, Rs. 80



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U S H A

A Tradition of Excellence

Indian publishing strikes gold

By NARENDRA KUMAR

ENGLISH language publishing in India has come of age during the last decade. From being attached to the apron-strings of foreign publishing houses through their subsidiaries, it has come to have a personality of its own. While foreign subsidiaries contented themselves with reprinting programmes to feed the Indian market, to the extent that the nursery rhymes taught in public schools are in an idiom alien to Indian ears, indigenous publishing has taken qualitative jumps during this brief period. Previously Indian publishing was like the proverbial coy Indian bride, wholly dependent on the "Lord of the House". As a matter of fact, the growth of Indian publishing during the sixties was centred around the reprint programme under the wheat loan agreement with the US Government.

The programme, an indirect form of cultural imperialism, worked to the satisfaction of all except the long-range interest of publishing in India. It operated in the following manner. Plenty of rupee funds were available under the wheat loan agreement between the Governments of India and the United States. Part of the funds was made available to Indian publishers for reprinting outdated textbooks. The American publisher was happy because he could get huge royalties. The Indian publisher made a huge profit because his risk was entirely underwritten. The U. S. Government was more than satisfied because it could conveniently extend its ideological battles across

the seas. The sufferers were the Indian students who were made to read books not written for their needs. From a subsidiary role during the days of British hegemony, Indian publishing was in danger of reaching the nadir by following in the steps of American publishing by accepting the wheat loan subsidies.

The upturn in Indian publishing took place only in the seventies, for which ground was prepared during the previous decade. The change came about as a result of an upswing in several walks of life in India. The Indian elite now had sufficient confidence in its potentialities by the sixties to take the initiative at home and abroad. In other words, propitious conditions were prevalent on account of favourable objective factors. Once this had been achieved, subjective situations acted as catalytic agents to bring about major changes.

There is no doubt that Asia Publishing House of Bombay showed the way like a prairie fire



spread wide and far by a single spark. At one time, the premier publishing house came to have a virtual monopoly of quality book-publishing in India, although subsequently it came to a sad end. That is another story. What Asia Publishing House and its live-wire promoter Peter Jaysinghe came to establish was the fact that, with sustained effort, Indian publishing had the potential of being world class. The other event of note was a book that made publishing history in India. It was Lieutenant-General B. M. Kaul's *Untold Story* published by Allied Publishers in 1967. The late general, notorious for his poor leadership during the Sino-Indian war, was as pompous as any human being could be. In this book of over 500 pages, he almost tried to establish that he would have won the war single-handed but for his frequent breakdowns and the cowardly aides that surrounded him. From the fact that 1,000 copies was the outer limit for the most books published in India at that time, the book broke all records. It proved the point that the potential market for books in India was like virgin soil awaiting to be tapped. From then onwards, there was no looking back for Indian publishers. Thus the sixties provided the backdrop for what was to come about during the seventies— opening of the floodgates of the Aswan for everybody to watch in a state of perpetual wonderment.

Paradoxically enough, the seventies have also seen the widening tentacles of the public sector over publishing in India. It has cornered a big chunk of the textbook market. Witness the example of the National Council of Education and Research Training (NCERT) publishing a large variety of textbooks, an agency blissfully unaware of the latest trends in the marketing of books. Similar is the situation with other Governmental agencies like the National Book Trust and Sahitya Akademi, with huge stocks lying unsold because of inefficient management. The public sector, timid to the extreme in expressing bold ideas in print, has entered a sphere which does not legitimately belong to it. With all the advantages, it is unable to compete with private sector.

Seventies was the decade in which Indian publishing came to maturity and is now entitled to be called an industry in its own right. It is now reaching a stage where it can challenge the primacy of Anglo-American publishing in several Afro-Asian countries and match their efforts in these areas. Indian publishing has placed the foreign subsidiaries in a defensive position in general publishing and is attempting to secure a niche in textbook publishing as well. While it has not been roses all the way, Indian publishing has expanded by the ideal combination of improved publishing methods, distribution techniques, and scientific management. There has also been a careful assessment of market potentialities. The crop of Emergency books have established that proper promotion and an accurate assessment of the market can open entirely new areas and attract a wide range of readers who earlier did not buy books. These books have done more for publishing during the seventies than any other category of books.

Besides the Emergency literature, there is nothing to beat as bestseller *Freedom at Midnight*

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now ?



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Clinical tests prove that Macleans helps protect teeth from caries. The Fluoride in Macleans combines with tooth enamel to strengthen it and increase its resistance to decay.

Only Macleans with its two-way action fights acids while it fortifies tooth enamel.

*Get Macleans today
Keep the liquid diet away*



by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre. The book, written in the form of true fiction about the events leading to the independence of India, has set the publishing world practically on fire. Ordinarily, general books sell no more than 1,000 to 2,000 copies. What made so many, who normally do not touch books with a pair of tongs, buy it? This book and the plethora of Emergency books have established once and for all that there is a potential market in the country ready to be tapped. It is to be remembered that prestigious publishers all over the world depend for profits on one or two bestsellers, and the future of Indian publishing also lies in creating a similar situation.

The success of Indian publishing in the eighties is visualised on the assumption that a formula can be successfully devised to admix the bestsellers with books commanding more modest sales. Bestsellers can also be quality books. The success or failure of Indian publishing equally depends upon the academic community which, unfortunately, has not kept pace with the technological and managerial potentialities of publishing in India. High production standards cannot help a book if its contents are mediocre. The fact is that, academically, Indian books leave much to be desired. Where is a *Cambridge History of India* series or a stirring history of the freedom movement? There is not one good economic history of India produced during the last 30 years. Similarly, there is not a single good work on India's foreign policy, in spite of the fact that Jawaharlal Nehru has left rich legacy. In fact, many major fields of activity in the social sciences are totally neglected. The greatest single handicap of publishing breaking through its *Lakshman Rekha* rests on the shoulders of the academics. It devolves upon academic institutions like the Indian Council of Historical Research and the Indian Council of Social Science Research to help rectify the situation.



THE quality of books published in India during the seventies can be gauged by taking a sample of 20 books. These books can be divided into two convenient categories. The first list of ten books consists of those that can be singled out for quality the other of

books that could "have been great". It may be worthwhile to make an assessment of each of the books included in our two lists. This assessment can probably be taken as a barometer of the quality of books published in the country.

My favourite book remains *Freedom at Midnight*. This is a book that has been variously described. It has also been called a *book of fiction*. However, the fictional representation has a more life-like quality than the truth itself. What distinguishes this work is the vindication of Gandhi.

The other two of my favourites are books by women authors. *Reason Wounded* is a story of a woman who dared to organize agricultural workers, appropriately described by her as "impoverished, immigrant *purbias*". She landed herself in detention under MISA during the Emergency. Mrs Lewis presents a most authentic image of what might be called the "suburban countryside". The



other book by a woman author, *My Years in an Indian Prison*, is by a young English school teacher who was arrested in 1970 for her alleged Naxalite connections. She was held for five years without trial in a Bihar prison. She presents the most moving picture of day-to-day life in a Bihar prison cell.

Two more books on my list are works of fiction. Indian English has become respectable as a result of Mulk Raj Anand's writings. I have enjoyed reading his latest novel, *Confessions of a Lover*. The book is almost an autobiography. It vividly portrays middle class life in pre-partition Punjab. Mr Anand, like any other good Punjabi, is a romantic at heart and this is amply proved in his novel. My other favourite is a novel translated from Bengali, *It Does not Die*. It is also autobiographical. *It Does not Die* by Maitreyi Devi is about Indian womanhood with its typical Mirabai complex. Her story of self love is very moving, in spite of the fact that it contains a lot of sentimental hogwash.

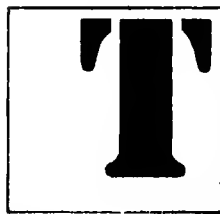
My Days with Gandhi by Professor N. K. Bose has been hardly noticed. But it is, perhaps, one

of the best assessments of Gandhi. The book has a curious history. Navajivan Publishing House, which had originally sponsored the publication in the fifties, refused to publish it and the reasons for refusal are best stated in the letter that Professor Bose received from the Managing Trustees of the Publishing House: "I am of the opinion that you better be advised to leave out of the book Bapu's experiment in sex or Brahmacharya and reconstitute the book to say about Bapu's great work in Noakhali."

The remaining four titles are academic, with the exception of *Ancient India* by Professor R. S. Sharma of Delhi University. The book, intended to be a school-level textbook, has become the subject of a raging public controversy. Professor Sharma has been savagely attacked and the textbook withdrawn by the Ministry of Education. For that reason alone, apart from the readability, this book is also my favourite.

I shall include the *Indian Political System* by Professor B. B. Misra for its solidity. It is not an easy book to read but is an excellent case study of how books should come to be written. Professor Misra is a model scholar who puts his life into works. Similarly, *The History and Culture of the Indian People* in 11 volumes, edited by Professor R. C. Majumdar, is not an easy work to go through. It has a definite point of view about Indian history and states it without ambiguity. Several hundred scholars have contributed towards the completion of the series.

The best work in my view is *The Remembered Village* by Professor M. N. Srinivas who has based his monography on intensive field work done by him over a period of 18 years in a village called Rampura. The village has now been placed on the ethnographic map of the world. The records Professor Srinivas studiously compiled were destroyed in a fire, and the present monograph is based purely on memory. In a way, the accident was a blessing because the result is a book that is most readable.



THE ten books in the second list are in the category of the "may have been" greats. Some of those fall short of being outstanding and others are simply mediocre. Of these, seven are autobiographies, memoirs and diaries, two are about the Emergency and the

last is a piece of fiction based on a film script. Of these, *Jawaharlal Nehru — A Biography* by Professor S. Gopal is the most meticulous work on the late Prime Minister. Sponsored by the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund with almost full access to private papers, the biography, however, is not definitive. Professor Gopal has so much as confessed in the preface that "Jawaharlal was the hero of my youth." And the biography does not rise above the level of adulation.

Contrasted with this work *The Story of My Life* by Morarji Desai is a mere catalogue of events. The third volume, written under detention during the Emergency, is more pre-occupied with Mrs Gandhi's style of functioning than with his own life. While the sincerity of the man is apparent, this does not compensate for what is

normally defined as an autobiography.

The next is *Portrait of a President* by Gyanwati Darbar. This is diary based on daily jottings by the late President Dr Rajendra Prasad. There are more than 500 letters written during six years, i.e., 1956 to 1962 by the President of India, oddly enough, to his personal secretary. The volumes are a fit subject for the psychological analysis of the great man. Apart from revealing some minor facts about Dr Rajendra Prasad, the letters are not very forthcoming.

In a separate category is *Living an Era* by D. P. Mishra, now in two volumes. Mr Mishra was in the thick of major political controversies in the Congress Party. He has done a meticulous job of writing his autobiography but there are no fireworks in it. However, it is excellent as a book of record. It is hoped that in his final volume of memoirs dealing with Mrs Indira Gandhi era, he may come out with some interesting facts.

The next work is an autobiography by the great diplomat K. M. Panikkar. It has been translated from Malayalam and seems to be based on pieces contributed to a periodical publication. This is established by the fact that each chapter is more or less of uneven length. I felt very much disappointed by this work because he seems to be less than frank in stating the facts.

A Dangerous Place by the former American Ambassador to India got undue local publicity because of its brief reference to the activities of CIA in this country. The book is based on his jottings as the American representative to the UN, and it certainly does not deserve the publicity it has received.

There is also the other category of three books relating to Emergency. First of all, mention must be made of *Prison Diary* of Jayaprakash Narayan. The first few words — "my world lies in a shambles around me. I am afraid I shall not see it put together again in my life-time" — are very evocative. Otherwise, the diary does not measure up to the standards expected of the grand old man of Sarvodaya. Similarly, Kuldip Nayar's *The Judgement*, which proved to be a runaway success, could still have been a more outstanding work but for the time available to the author to write the book. However, it has done more for anti-authoritarianism than many other books on the same subject. Nihal Singh's book *Indira's India: A Political Notebook* which was late in coming, contains several perceptive remarks but otherwise there is not much in it.

Last but not least is a piece of fiction by the well-known novelist M. Malgonkar. Since it is based on a film-script *Shalimar*, Malgonkar had to work under creative restraints.

The above assessment of 20 books published during the last decade amply establishes that the breakthrough in Indian publishing is imminent, but for the fact that the academicians in India are not producing works of quality that can place India on the publishing map. Contemporary India is full of unlimited possibilities — only if the intellectual community will awake, arise, and accept the challenge posed before it.

The author is Managing Director of Vikas Publishing House

Goa's drug rings flourish

Problem for the law

IT took a cartload of firewood, five litres of kerosene, half a dozen old truck tyres and two and a half hours to burn his body. He had died due to excessive drugs on a Goan beach. The police collected the ashes the next day and handed them over to his mother, a Canadian, who had come to Goa for this sole and painful purpose. Since her arrival, she had been moving, for four days, between the city morgue and her hotel.

Hippism is, at long last, dying, even in Goa—a slow and inexorable death. Drug-running is not. Why? No one has an answer. How drug-running is expanding is partly known. The growth of tourism has also enhanced the availability of willing—and well-paid—carriers, now no more the scruffy, self-incriminating hippy of yesteryear, but a more elusive, ostensibly more affluent “visitor from abroad”. It is also known, even if partly, who the men are behind the scenes. Enoch Powells the world over might be delighted to know that Indian migration to the West has become, due to a variety of reasons, a definite “faptor” in the everexpanding racket.

White danseuses in dishabille (“no photographs please” was the agreed condition to my entry) convolute in an ever-accelerating rhythm to a climactic frenzy, with several of them sprawled on the ground and hysterically gyrating their, by now, bared pubis. A while ago, they had been swinging slowly, and almost artistically, their arms while dancing. They held in the hollow of their palms little coconut shells with oilsoaked cotton wicks lit inside. And the little tongues of flickering fire made beautiful zigzag images in the dark, smokefilled room. This, I am told, is no choreographic tomfoolery; this is the latest and unabridged edition of the “Lord’s prayer”. At the end of it all, every one is given his daily bread and a fair share of “Shit”, which is what they call hashish. Morphine and LSD have to be paid for. So must “hash”, if demanded in large quantities. The Nordic girl by my side, her wrinkled breasts hanging from her emaciated ribcage, can afford us more than the free community chillum which she shares with a midget-sized Negro, garishly dressed, wearing dark glasses, and huge silver rings which twinkle every time he appreciatively, and almost frequently, pendulates his head to the tune of the music booming from the sound system.

The day in this commune begins at dawn. The arch priest, a lame French Canadian, asks everyone to queue



Lt Governor P. S. Gill

and makes them peel potatoes, chop cabbages and dice meat. The cauldron is then put to boil. It is a tasty chop-suey, sold at Rs 15 for “a bellyful”. In the rooms hired out by the commune, freedom knows no bars. After the chop-suey, a massive and hirsute Indian repaired to his room with two white girls in tow. They had rapturously acknowledged they all had the “right vibes”. They left in a hurry.

Here, in this commune, hashish, is chemically refined and a whole kilo converted into tiny pastilles, not much larger than shirt buttons. In fact, some pastilles are camouflaged to look like cloth buttons.

A leading partner of this particular ring is a London-based Indian. He has, rather ingeniously, used his position as a jailer to build up his gang of peddlers, pushers and carriers. All around the beach there are joints with suggestive names. There is one right on the main road which is “The Flower Scene Restaurant. Another, in the midst of a coconut grove, is the “Dog’s Place”. Nude men and women bathe at the two nearby wells.

In recent swoops, by police, local Excise and Central Excise—all much to the merriment of the dope rings acting disjunctedly and, often, at cross purpose—Goa’s Calangute-Baga-Anjuna beach belt has yielded, at least, 60 kgs of hashish and opium and morphine worth about Rs 1.5 to 2 lakhs. But this, is “Chicken feed” admit the investigators. With the recent events in the Middle East leading to a virtual stoppage of overland tourism between Europe and India, presently the emphasis is on air transport and hallucinogenics are usually treated in order to reduce weight and bulk.

Francis Coraie Mullin, whose habeas corpus petition failed in the Supreme Court is one of the few of her kind held under COFEPOSA, for suspected linkages with major inter-

national drug gangs. Recently Goa police stumbled accidentally on “Adolph” a German wanted in his country for the last eight years in connection with a number of major criminal cases, two of which have already earned him a conviction to 12 years of hard labour. This particular German seems to be in league with an Indian who goes by the name of Byriani. Byriani’s ambition is that of putting up the largest and most up-to-date beauty parlour in Bombay. Reportedly, the CBI had the registers of the luxurious Fort Aguada Beach Resort photographed, after it was established that Byriani was a frequent guest at the hotel. Two years ago, on March 12, 1978, one of his lady friends—the wife of a rich Indian clothier established in Paris—died suddenly and mysteriously in a cottage at the Aguada resort rented by Byriani and where both had been living. According to the account given to the police, they were planning a luxury restaurant in Goa. The lady’s death was due to “cardiac ischiemia” and her body was promptly claimed and cremated in Goa by someone who identified himself as her son.

The various enforcement authorities privately concede that they hardly feel encouraged to take to drug racket busting seriously. They have positive information that the gangs have considerable resources, both by way of contacts at the right places with loyal and ruthless liquidators on their payroll. Intelligence sources even suggest that some of the Indian associates of the foreign gangs have, in turn, “clean” business associations with the high and mighty.

Such as? I query

Such as Ruksana, is the answer.

Ruksana who? I insist.

You are asking too much now, I am told and lewd laughter rocks the investigator’s tiny cubicle.

According to Central Excise sources, it is difficult to assess what is going on in Goa on the drug scene. “These are all flowing transactions”. I am told. What does it mean? Apparently, not much more than that. For some obscure reason, there is a kind of inertia. But bureaucrats’ inhibitions are understandable. Goa’s State Excise Commissioner, young, petite, intelligent and charming Mrs Dhingra, an IAS, officer has been under pressure from none other than the Lt. Governor himself. The Lt. Governor wanted her to issue a permit of three tolas of opium for his opium-addicted elder brother, Mr. Bhagwan Singh. Mrs Dhingra refused. And a move is now on to have the law amended since an honest officer would neither bend nor break it!

MARIO CABRAL E SA, Panaji

Sugar prices zoom

Then it must be election time



The Union Agriculture Minister, Rao Birendra Singh, at the swearing-in ceremony

ONE clue that the dissolution of the Assemblies and the resultant elections were certainties was the price of sugar, unfailing indication of the intentions of politicians out on the prowl for election funds. That sugar has become the commodity for swindling the consumer and simultaneously swelling election coffers is perhaps nothing new, but what is new is the soaring height reached by such blatant swindling. Consumers remain helpless despite the so-called 'Consumers' Guidance' and the Essential Commodities Act.

What makes the sugar swindle so scandalous is the fact that politicians are directly involved here. With regard to other commodities, it is an accepted fact that the private sector indulges in profiteering and passes on slush money and election funds to politicians at election time on a quid pro quo basis. But in the case of sugar, since the sugar barons are either Ministers or political chieftains the judge and the accused are one. The Government makes the money and cries wolf at the same time.

In Bombay this is what happened in the period between the Congress (I) victory at the Lok Sabha polls

and the first week of March. After Mrs Gandhi came to power, sugar, which was selling around Rs. 5 per kg, zoomed to Rs. 7 and above. In addition, it was not available in several places. Who pocketed this extra money? Till February 15, Maharashtra, which produces one-third of the country's sugar, produced eight lakh tonnes. The total sugar available therefore was eight lakh tonnes plus a further nine lakh tonnes which was the opening stock from the previous season. Of this, 12 lakh tonnes were still with the factories as on January 31, thereby creating an artificial shortage. One of the reasons given by the sugar barons was nonavailability of wagons.

The cost of production of sugar in Maharashtra is among the lowest in the country. Compared to Rs. 3.35 per kg in Bihar it is Rs. 2.20 in Maharashtra. Adding the excise cost plus transport charges it comes to around Rs. 2.90 per kg. But sugar was selling in the market at between Rs. 6 and Rs. 7 which means that the sugar barons made a clear Rs. 3 per kg or Rs. 300 per quintal or Rs. 3,000 per tonne. So assuming that they sold six lakh tonnes the sugar barons made a clear Rs. 18 crores.

The consumers have been swindled to the tune of Rs. 18 crores. One might argue that this money made is not black money and was made officially but then all money in the coffers of the sugar factories is the property of the sugar barons and the barons alone. And this means that the sugar barons have this much money to play around with in the Assembly elections. One has to watch their extravagant election campaigns to know how much they have to throw around. And who are these sugar barons? Today two-thirds of the sugar factories in Maharashtra are owned by the Congress (I) politicians and the rest Congress (U) politicians led by Vasantdada Patil and Mr Sharad Pawar respectively.

Another indication is the mysterious silence of the Union Agriculture Minister, Rao Birendra Singh. Shortly after he assumed the portfolio he promised to hold a departmental inquiry into the muddle which had resulted in the soaring of sugar prices. He promised that stringent measures would be taken against those found guilty. One waited in vain, however, for him to act but nothing happened, because he must have discovered his fellow Congressmen as the biggest beneficiaries. Singh was enthusiastic initially perhaps because he thought that the muddle was the making of the previous Government. It is true that the Charan Singh Government had subtly gifted Rs. 3 crores to the sugar mills. As one paper wrote on December 31, 1979; "by raising the price of sugar by Rs. 30 the Charan Government made a subtle gift running into crores of rupees to industry and trade. The Government has imposed an excise duty of Rs. 30 per quintal on old stocks in order to prevent mills from taking advantage of the increased price. However mills (have) already transferred huge stocks from godowns and the amount of sugar in the pipeline is over ten lakh tonnes. It means that hoarders and traders will coolly make Rs. three crores at the cost of the consumers".

In Maharashtra the sugar barons have always manipulated the disposal of sugar for personal or Party gain and do not hesitate to create an artificial scarcity if necessary. During the period from October 1978 to June 1979 they sold only 16 lakh tonnes, averaging less than two lakh tonnes per month because prices were Rs. 2.40 per kg. In the period July-September 1979 when prices went up to Rs. 2.90 per kg they sold seven lakh tonnes or over 2 lakh tonnes per month.

They can keep stocks endlessly because of the liberal loans they get. They got Rs. 62 crores from the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank, Rs. 14 crores from the Urban Cooperative Bank and Rs. 20 crores from the District Central Cooperative Banks to which they hypothecate sugar stocks. This is allegedly how they were able to carry stocks from April 1978 to July-September when prices rose.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

NOTES

A FRIEND of mine has been living in Western Europe for about ten years now. He is a professional sitar player, travelling where the diminishing Indian music market will take him: not very far now that George Harrison has withdrawn his patronage to this exotic art form and the nirvana-seeking adolescent is under pressure to remain a football hooligan in West Ham. My friend divides the year between England, France, Germany and India with London as his base, and he remains an Indian passport holder.

A few months ago he received a printed letter from the Electoral Registration Officer asking him to enter the Register of Electors 1980 by filling up the enclosed form. Initially he thought this to be a mistake: after all as an Indian citizen how could he be "entitled to vote at Parliamentary, European Assembly or local elections". But then he read the form and discovered that he was perfectly capable of voting for or against Missus Thatcher if he wanted to. The very first sentence in the form said: "You are required to enter—meaning all British subjects—(Commonwealth citizens are British subjects) and citizens of the Irish Republic who will be resident at your address on 10th October 1979 and who will be 18 or over by 15th February 1981" etcetera. I don't know what the citizens of the Irish Republic feel about this privilege, but the arrogance of that claim shocked me. "Commonwealth citizens are British Subjects." Her Majesty's Government may not be willing to admit it publicly, but we Indians stopped being subjects of Britain three decades ago. All "subject races" get limited franchise, I suppose: the right to vote but no right to full citizenship or elected office—that privilege is reserved for the correct mix of hormones. The horror scenario for a distant future: could British troops come to the aid of their Indian "subjects" in any "crisis"? Old colonisers never die; they simply stop getting into headlines.

IT probably sounds absurd, coming from a resident of Calcutta, but London must be one of the most depressing cities in the world—and believe me cities like Calcutta have a lot to be depressed about. But London must take the first place in the paranoia stakes. For the casual brown visitor the problem is more acute. Walk into a pub and you feel as if a film of hostility has been wrapped over your skin. Walk into a cinema to see *The Canterbury Tales* and people look at you

as if they have come for the art and you have come for the tits. Worst of all, London must be the most expensive place to get depressed in.

Actually, I can quite understand the Londoner getting sick of a tourist's face; he sees it so often. Tourism is a very debilitating service industry, consisting largely of selling myths at the maximum rate the market can bear; it's a con game, and nobody is quite sure how long the sting will last. There is too much that is sleazy in this business; you need both insultingly expensive restaurants and cheap pornography to satiate the widely varied needs of the tourist so that he can go back to Prohibition City, Saudi Arabia, or Very Littleville, Utah and brag about the "fun" that was had in London. All this must be especially galling for a city like London: after all once upon a time the Dick Whittingtons came to look at the Queen and the streets were paved with gold—von came then to pay homage to the city that ruled the world, and partook of such crumbs as it deigned to throw your way. London did not have to sell itself; the world came to it bearing gifts. Even after losing its political power London retained its confidence till the Sixties. Then suddenly it changed from vivacious queen into an old whore. Having been stripped of its power, proud London had an Arab sitting on its bum. Enough to depress anybody.

THEATRE and wit seem the only British assets that have survived the many onslaughts on British existence in recent times. It's impossible to get into the theatre since the tourists have bought all the tickets. The peculiar and fascinating British wit is still audible at dinner parties. Indeed this dark wit must be one of the finest achievements of the British upper classes, the only people in today's world who spend time and intellect turning conversation into an art form. It now seems that the egalitarianism of the second half of this century has managed to carry this wit down to the lower levels. When a certain person, whose name I do not want to remember, won nearly a million pounds at the pools, the BBC sent a team to find out what the man in the street (I thought he had gone out of fashion, but he clearly isn't extinct) would have done if a million pounds suddenly dropped into his lap. One old man answered the TV reporter immediately: "I would get rid of my wife". An exclamation mark, not to mention a question mark, hung in the air. Until the old man explained: "She would spend it, wouldn't

she?" I challenge anyone to come up with an equivalent story.

IN yet another marvellous episode in the long-continuing and God-knows-when-ending serial, *Operation Bluff*, the rich have managed to divert all the anger that should legitimately be addressed towards them. Once again the diversion has been in the direction of the working class: example, the massive hostility towards the steel strike. The industrialists of the diminishing competence, the financiers with friends in the Cabinet, the traders who get richer with every hiccup in the currency market and every deceit in international relations, the propertied who own vast stretches because of some lecherous or murderous ancestor: all these are respectable people, deferred to by the masses, pandered to by a mass media which has William Hickey instead of a heart and advertising instead of a brain. The working class is the big evil behind all Britain's problems. Every generation needs its whipping boy: the working class has become the target this time around. The hysteria with which the steel strike is being attacked, the passions that are being aroused, seem astonishing to a visitor. These are not the muted tones of democratic socialism or indeed social democracy; this is the harsh jingoism of war. Of course the working class has never made things easy for its defenders. In victory it is uncertain, in struggle it is fractious, and in defeat it is broken. It is lured into too many mistakes. At the moment the British working class seems headed for trouble. All the institutions are concentrating their heavy guns on it.

FOR us *Playboy*-hungry Indians, it is impossible to resist the temptation to pick up a copy upon arrival in the land of the free and the brave and the nude.

Particularly when Bo Derek is on the cover. Once again the American media has provided an international symbol of the wet dream, and once again I too have become a victim. What to do? But the most interesting thing I read in the March issue of *Playboy* had nothing to do with Bo Derek (the piece on her was awful even by the appalling standards set by tits and bum journalism). *Playboy* informed its readers that one place you can still buy chastity belts for the fornicating wife is in England. Apparently David Renwick of Sheffield hand forges them and sells them for 80 dollars each to those gentlemen inclined to keep a grip on their wives' morals in such a fashion.

M. J. AKBAR from LONDON

Pageantry and damp eyes



The Dalhousie Athletic Club, Calcutta, which turned 100 on March 8 this year, is the oldest football club in the country. There are no visible signs of age, however, and the lawns of the club are still as immaculately trimmed and green as they ever were. The tennis courts are still in excellent shape and the flower beds are still tended by loving hands. Like other clubs (which were founded later of course) on the Maidan, it is actually a tent-like construction but obviously very solid. There is thick green canvas wrapped around steel girders in order to provide a construction. The reason for this curious form of building is intriguing. When these Maidan clubs were

founded, the Army authorities at nearby Fort William discovered that the buildings would obstruct their field of fire in case of an invasion. So the clubs had to resort to this form of tents which could be dismantled in a short while to give the Army an unrestricted field of fire.

The early history of the club is the history of the Indian Football Association. Originally known as the Traders Club, it was founded by British residents working for Hamilton and Co, a jewellery concern in 1874. Six years later it assumed its present name although it is not known whether this had anything to do with Lord Dalhousie. When the Indian Football Association was founded in 1893, the Dalhousie Athletic donated a handsome trophy called the Trades Cup which later merged with the IFA Shield.

The club's president, the warm and popular Pearson Surita, spoke to Syed Nisar Mehdi Abdi on the last day of the centenary celebrations. "We may be 100 years old," he said, "but we are still a very happy family. That's what a club should be."

The Maharajah's puppeteers



There was this crisis when Air India were given a nine-hour ultimatum to remove one of their hoardings at Bombay's Nariman Point. The problem lay in the text of the copy, which ran "Sing, Charan, sing", a delightful spoof on that familiar sentence in every kindergarten reader, "Sing, mother, sing". This resulted in a discreet order to Hindustan Thomson Associates, the agency that handles Air India's advertisement campaign, to lay off politics. There had been other such capers before, like a hoarding which showed Acharya Kripalani and Krishna Menon dressed only in red underwear and competing against one another in a beauty contest. It even raised a major question in Par-

liament about the media's freedom to spoof our leaders. One recalls, however, that Krishna Menon laughed off the matter.

It is a sad end, according to Ashish Rajadhyaksha, if indeed it has really ended, to a fine age in Indian advertising. Bobby Kooka's 25 by 10 hoardings outside the Air India building all had one thing in common—the stamp of excellence. Ivan Arthur, copy chief at HTA and the person presently behind the hoardings, says "It is one of the most subtle forms of PR that one can imagine. It attempts to give a social comment while simultaneously getting its message across. We are not a big airline, we aren't the best in the world, but we are nice people to travel with, fun people, who can laugh at ourselves. It is this subtlety that most of our imitators—people who have tried to reflect current topics in their hoardings—have failed to achieve". He held up a board to illustrate his point. The legend ran "Let's fly from this 'promise' land to 40 cities worldwide". A neat swipe at the election campaigns.

Martian garbage?

Skylab had fallen long ago, so what could this strange contraption be? One moment it was floating in the sky and the next it was in the nets of a group of fishermen off the Digha coast, in the Bay of Bengal. First there was mild consternation, followed by a flutter of excitement. Could it be a satellite? Whatever it was, there was sure to be a reward for its recovery, so fishing for the day was temporarily forgotten and everyone returned to terra firma, where the news spread faster than a forest fire. The village elders were summoned and the greybeards were nonplussed as they looked at the strange object from one angle, then another. But none of them could fathom out what the strange object was. A con-

sensus was taken and the UFO was delivered to the nearest police station. A few enquiries, a couple of telephone calls and the mystery was solved. It was nothing quite as exciting as a miniature spy satellite; only an errant piece of meteorological equipment. Newspaper reports described it as a brass pot mounted on a tripod and weighed down by an anchor. When the Calcutta Met Department was contacted, the Director told Tirthankar Ghosh that he had not been informed about the recovery. He did say, however, that weather balloons with scientific instruments were sent aloft to monitor the latest weather reports and conditions. We presume, then that this particular balloon came to grief. Or was the object part of a high-flying B-52?

Dry wit



Geoff Boycott has a great reputation. Indeed he has two reputations, if we may be permitted to say so. Everyone knows he is a great batsman; that's the first. In cricketing circles he is looked on as a snob; that's the second. But Hareesh Munwani had a pleasant surprise when he met the English cricketer in

Bombay when the team arrived for the Jubilee Test. He found Boycott very receptive and warm as the Yorkshireman seemed to be in a very friendly mood. He even referred to Gavaskar with such affection as if he was the boy next door, and referred to him in almost every second sentence. What was more conspicuous was that he did not want to say anything about his teammates. One of his more classic comments was "If anyone ever picked a team with just Sunny and me, he wouldn't have to worry about the other nine players. If Sunny and I made 30 runs each and remained not out, that would be half the battle won. You see, to do that would take us one whole day". Good Yorkshire humour, that.

Weird encounters of the stilted kind

It could have been a scene straight out of a science fiction fantasy. A "creature" about 12 feet high walked down one of the busiest thoroughfares of Madras. The consequences, of course, can be imagined. Everywhere, traffic came to a halt as drivers and passengers alike stared and rubbed their eyes to make sure they were not having visions. Pedestrians craned their necks to get a better look, while taking care at the same time to ensure that they were reasonably far away in case the monster should turn boisterous. Little children whimpered in fear, and one inveterate alcoholic swore he would never touch the stuff again.

Even while life in the vicinity was paralysed temporarily, the clear notes of a bugle rang out from the pinnacle of the Madras University clocktower. As if by way of echoes, more bugles joined in and within moments the area was crammed with

curious people, wanting to know precisely what was going on. Then it turned out that the monsters were only humans on stilts. Unannounced, unheralded, Italian street theatre had come to Madras, by way of a street performance of *Albatri*, the dramatisation of a story written by French poet Baudelaire. A folk band kept everyone enthralled while the performers went through all their antics on the street. Like the *Pied Piper of Hamlyn*, the "creature" lured its audience—no longer apprehensive—along half a kilometre.

Actually, Tamil culture has its own variety of street theatre known as *Tharu Koothu*, which is very popular in rural areas. Yet, strangely enough, it took *Romzo Vescavi's Teatro Tacubile di Bergamo* to display the true potential of this unusual art form. Many citizens of Madras who missed the show, adds Ashok Kamath, have reason to rue it.

What could be 'better'?



Sunday, March 9 was the Big Day, Invitation Cup day. There were 26,000 people at the RCTC (Royal Calcutta Turf Club), half of them the scarred veterans of innumerable battles with their bookies; the regulars who do not mind whether it is a horse race, a donkey race or a zebra race just so long as they get the chance to lay their bets. The rest of the mammoth crowd, who probably wouldn't even be able to tell the difference between horses, donkeys or zebras, were at the race-

course simply because it was the biggest social event of the year. Certainly everyone got what they wanted. The socialites paraded and were admired, the punter-betted and lost and the newcomers experienced the hysteria that is racing.

There were two other attractions as a bonus. First there was West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu. Second, adds S. Vijayraghavan, was a yogi tipster, a self-styled sadhu giving money-back guarantees if his tips proved to be dud.

Charlie Bronson and all that jazz...



The Jazztest that was held in Calcutta in late February caused a great deal of excitement for music fans in this city. It was a very festive atmosphere at the grounds of St Paul's Cathedral; indeed it was a welcome change to see so much life and colour in the precincts of a church. The stars were celebrities of course, but not in the same category as cricketers, although there were autograph hunters by the dozen. On the first day, however, there was great excitement. Whisper had it that the famous barrel-chested actor Charles Bronson had arrived and was somewhere in the audience. Everywhere, everybody stared hard in the hope of finding the actor

first. One timid young lass spotted someone who fitted the description and told her friend sitting alongside her. The friend told another friend who in turn told yet another friend. But no one wanted to go and see if the rumour was really a rumour or if it had its basis in truth. Eventually the friend of a friend of somebody else's friend decided to beard the lion in his den and clutching an autograph book, walked up to where the great man sat. He smiled at her and signed. She was ecstatic and went back to her friends giggling with glee. Together they examined the signature. It was not Charles Bronson. Nor was it Casimir Buchinsky (the actor's real name).

The signature read "Manfred Schoof". Enquiries revealed that Bronson's double was actually a trumpeter with the group Globe Unity. But the friend of a friend of somebody else's friend was still not convinced. So she stood around till Bronson/Schoof left. Alas, though the features tallied exactly with those of the actor, the man was not half as broad as the Hollywood he-man.

Marry, 'tis passing strange

Everything was going according to schedule. The parents of the young girl had selected a suitably handsome young man and the date for the wedding had been finalised. There was the usual gaiety and last-minute excitement, but there were no portents of what was to happen. On the appointed day, when the car arrived for the bride, it was discovered that the house was surrounded by young men of the locality who had an earnest plea to make. The groom, they insisted, was a notorious character with whom marriage was a way of life. It appeared that he had been married several times before, the sole intention being the lure of a dowry. While these explanations were being made, the groom and his father managed to slip away, but they did not escape for long. The bride's family, accompanied by the young men, arrived on the trickster's

doorstep and proved that their allegations were true.

The groom and his father were then looked up in a room, reports Biswaranjan Sarkar, while the local people appealed to the young men to replace the groom. Eventually, one young man, who was asleep in his house, was awoken and told the story. He agreed to marry the girl, but insisted on speaking to her first. His wish was granted and he explained to the girl that though he was educated, he was unemployed and in addition, had also served a term as a political prisoner. The girl, undaunted, agreed to the wedding.

That was not the end of the sort story. The trickster was made to part with his clothes for his replacement and the wedding went off smoothly. The next day, the rogue had his head shaved and was made to run seven rounds of the locality, interspersed with thrashing.

THE WORLD

Jogging to ransom



February 27 was the Dominican Republics Independence Day. Little did the 27 diplomats suspect that they would soon be imprisoned and kept hostage by a group of guerillas belonging to the April 19th Movement (M-19). All the guerillas wanted was the release of political prisoners of whom they named 311, 50 million dollars and admission by the Colombian Government that it had been holding show trials and torturing prisoners. There was no means of communication between the guerillas and those negotiating the release of the hostages till

a reporter ventured forth to the Dominican Embassy with barely his underwear and a two-way radio. It is believed that the Colombian President, Julio Cesar Turbay is unwilling to bend down to the demands of the guerillas. He has a reason since the guerillas cannot be trusted at all. When they went to take over the Embassy they were in the guise of joggers and they carried weapons in their sports bags. They looked so innocent that no one bothered them. Military rulers, beware of joggers with sports bags on their shoulders.

Fourthcoming ?

This should be a lesson to all weight watchers and fans of that special American ambassador with only three credentials: a hefty physique, a big mouth and a beautiful wife. He was not successful in arranging the Olympic boycott of the African countries. Perhaps that spurred him on and he declared that he was going to make a comeback by winning the world heavyweight title for the fourth time in succession. And Muhammad Ali, preacher and boxing champ—in that order, since he prefers to do more preaching now — meant business. He went in to his Deer Lake training camp weighing 251 pounds and by March 4,



after his rigorous workout he was down to 243 pounds only.

The second sex arrives

Women might after all be allowed to make an entry into a hallowed male precinct—the French Academy. There is a vacant chair among the 40 caused by the death of Roger Caillois. Within the forbidden walls of the erudite institution on the Left bank of the Seine a bitter struggle has been going on since last December between those who have championed the cause of French authoress, Marguerite Yourcenar, and Jean Dorst, the director of the Paris Natural History Museum. The elections had been postponed after an exchange of insults among the intellectuals. Most young members of the Academy have sponsored the Marguerite Yourcenar. One such is Jean d'Ormesson, the former editor of *Le Figaro*. He is 56 years old and has had to be at the receiving end of the insults. He has been called a "leftist" and a "young

hooligan". Mme Yourcenar is definitely a favourite of the young since she had her passport restored in record time by 54-year-old the French Justice Minister and author Alain Peyrefitte, also an Academy member. She had become a naturalised American citizen and has a home in New England for the last 30 years. She also has dramatist Eugene Ionesco and Felicien Marceau supporting her. Among her opponents are Andre Chamson who has named her a "Loch Ness monster". The other is Jean Dutourd, the famous columnist who said: "I am against a woman in the Academy". For him the greatest honour one could do to a woman was to admire her without electing her. But his words proved useless. The members of the Academy did elect after 345 years by 20-12 votes the Belgian-born 76-year-old Marguerite Yourcenar.

Shakespeare to provide relief

There were nine young "Elizabethans" rolling off "words, words, words" written by the illustrious Bard of Avon. They were trying to read the complete works of William Shakespeare — all 37 plays, 154 sonnets and 5 poems consisting of 107,098 lines—in an effort to break the world record of 37 hrs 22 mins. This speed reading performance took place on February 29 in England. The competitors were drama students from Bretton Hall College, Wakefield and the

Royal Holloway College of London, the present record holders. Altogether ten students were chosen to exercise their vocal chords and tongues. However, one woman had to drop out as she had chicken pox. The readers looked after their voices and their stomachs with sausages and chips, throat tablets, peppermints, aspirin tablets and water. All this frenzy and speed were indeed for a good cause since the students were collecting aid for OXFAM relief.

Olympian interpretations

Whether the Moscow Games eventually take place or not, the Soviet Union is going ahead with preparations. And for the Russians everything is centred around politics: even the students being trained as interpreters for the Olympics are being closely scrutinised under a political microscope. For a start, their political knowledge has to be as vast. In addition, of course, their knowledge of a second language

has to be considerable. The Komsomol members of Moscow, therefore, have the best chances of being selected as interpreters since they are the only ones who can demonstrate their dependability by their attendance at political meetings. Consequently, preparations are also afoot at the Moskovsky Komsomlets Institute for oral political examinations and for the assessment of socio-political awareness.

A street named home

Around 52,000 people needed houses in the Dutch capital of Amsterdam. So what did they do? On March 3, the homeless set up barricades on the streets and squatted. The authorities acted. More than 1,000 troops and policemen using tanks and armoured cars cleared the barricades. But they had nothing against the squatters so they let them stay on the streets. According to the Amsterdam city council the Dutch capital has not seen such violence since 1975. How-

ever, at that time the issue was different. The protest was against the demolition of houses to accommodate a new metro. The city fathers hope that the tempers of the protesters will cool down by April 30 when Princess Beatrix will become queen. Meanwhile, the city council is undaunted. It is planning to bring new legislation against protesting on streets and it will then be punishable by fines. Till then, for the Dutch, a street is a home away from home.

Not cricket

Football players in Italy are believed to be playing a different type of game. Recently, a fruit dealer and a restaurant owner filed a complaint on behalf of a gambling syndicate, which had suffered heavy losses, that 27 players of 12 teams including two national stars were guilty of taking bribes to change the outcome of the league games. This upset the gamblers who had lost a lot of money.

The Italian state prosecutor's office has already started investigating although no proof has yet been offered. The two national players supposedly involved are Paolo Rossi of Perugia and Lazio's striker, Bruno Giordano. Rossi and other Italian footballers earn millions and are idolised by the fans. Meanwhile, those who filed the complaint had fled Rome and are "in fear of their lives". Different type of ball game, what?

Second in line

Their prince was sure to win. After all, why wouldn't he? He was riding the best horse — Long Wharf — owned by the American millionaire-art collector, Paul Mellon. In fact, such was the confidence in both jockey and horse, that punters and gullible housewives put a lot of their money on them. They made him favourite at 13-8 to win the two-mile race. But Charles, Prince of Wales, and heir apparent to throne of England, betrayed their trust. At his first public race — the Mad Hatters' private sweepstake, at Plumpton on March 4. — he proved that he was content to remain number two. The one who beat the Prince was an amateur rider and an equestrian journalist from the BBC, Derek Thompson. Others who raced were Richard Meade and Vic Lownes, controller of the Playboy empire. At the end of the race Prince Charles limped out and surveyed his domain of torn betting slips for his horse and told the 5,300 record crowd: "I



would like to say how sorry I am to those who have put so much money on me ... next time I shall know better how to catch up on the man in front".

Marrying for the cause

The American hostages might not be pleased with what Imam Khomeini of Iran has done for their release and their future but there are two young Iranians who should be grateful to him. They are Miss Zahran Gholami Balouk, a nurse in the intensive care unit of the Mehrol Reza hospital near Teheran where the Ayatollah was recovering. The other is Mr Ahmad Davudi Ilaghighatalab, a technician of the same hospital. The two lost their hearts to each other and what better proposition than being married by the great man himself? The Ayatollah did just that and added an autographed Koran.

Heart warming

Major Catastrophe had been given a new pacemaker some time ago. Although he has lived life to the full he has a weak heart; hence the pacemaker. When the operation had been performed at the Bristol University Veterinary Hospital, England, the Major had revived a shade earlier than expected and in trying to be his usual old energetic self had dislodged a wire in his "second heart". The doctors had no other option but to operate on him once again to connect the lead. Major Catastrophe is a close friend of Mr and Mrs Barry Harcombe of Somerset. He is a yellow Labrador.

Whose Pakistan?

Smart, fair, innaculately dressed, Salman Taseer, free-thinking Pakistani journalist, is a Zia-bater with a difference. He is not afraid of speaking out, sometimes even a trifle too loudly. Expectedly, he's got into trouble, but doesn't seem to bother.

After a telephonic appointment, Mr Taseer strode into our Delhi office one day and sat down to tell us what he thought of Zia, the army and the Americans. Author of *Bhutto: A political biography*, Taseer is a wistful admirer of the dead leader, and thinks, as many others do, that his ghost haunts the junta. "Bhutto is still very much a symbol in Pakistan, and the People's Party is still very much in contact with opportunist elements staying on," he holds. In Lahotri, for instance, which is Mr Bhutto's hometown, the People's Party still commands the allegiance of 80 to 90 per cent of the electorate. Popular feeling all over the country, even among the peasantry who form as much as 80 per cent of the population, is still very obviously against General Zia, and for the PPP, now being led by Bhutto's widow and indefatigable daughter.

As for the Army, most of the Generals around Zia know they "are riding on the back of a tiger". Nobody would like falling off now, but are waiting for

the right moment. The Afghanistan flare-up has only given the strongarm dictator an ideal excuse to go on—just the kind he was waiting for.

Things have come to a sorry pass already. Prices are much higher than in India and people are tired of being ruled by Generals. Taseer says. Not many political prisoners remain in jail now, even the dissident journalist Salaamat Ali may be let off, because the junta is scared of widespread trouble. "They know protest would become uncontrollable," Taseer remarks. Zia has enough trouble already: Pakistan lacks an industrial base, the oil bill, now a massive burden, has shot up to a billion dollars, and the trade deficit is about Rs two billion.

If the people do not support Zia, who does? "The mullahs and the Jamaat," Taseer replies. "But Islamic fervour is confined only to the urban petty bourgeoisie. The Jamaat-e-Islami won only three seats in 1972. Its only strength lies in a well-knit organisation: it can muster 20,000 people at the drop of a hat." But such is his bankruptcy of support, he has taken to entertaining mullahs from abroad: "A delegation of mullahs from China had visited Pakistan, as if there aren't enough in Pakistan," the journalist remarks, smiling.

KHAAS BAAT

WHILE talking of female stars, and Mamta's attempts to come back to films, it is Dimple Khanna, who looks a real knockout, with her milk-and-roses skin, her svelte, smart appearance in spite of two kids. She is still capable of bagging roles by the dozen. But given a choice between family life with Rajesh Khanna and a career, she says the choice she has made is giving her lasting happiness—how long would a career have lasted?

IN contrast, one thinks of Neetu Singh the sweet little girl who never gave herself airs—the higher she got in films, the humbler she seemed to be.

Dimple - still vivacious young mom

While other girls declare that they want a husband and a home to settle down, it is only this girl who truly loved setting up a home with Chitnu Kapoor. So, while she loved him she quietly completed all her films, refused more offers at the very peak of her career, and had a date fixed for marriage which was comfortably ahead of her last shooting-day. There are girls who follow the

Dinesh Nagar



Dharmendra, sturdy and evergreen

dictates of the heart, proved Neetu, but not at the cost of giving others heart-attacks.

AND age is no factor when you meet Dharmendra who still looks like the big top male hero that he is—not a washout. When he walked in along with a young 20-year-old boy at a muhurat, they looked like brothers—but the boy was his son, who has been in London training for an academic course. Whether his films become a hit or flop, he is still the same, loyal as ever, both to his family and to Hema. He is finally planning to direct a film, based on an idea which has been shaping in his mind over the past year or so—it is a comedy and he is the hero of the film. He expects to start on it by the year-end.

AN established actress remarked that the problem with today's stars is that they won stardom all too quickly. That's why they behave as irresponsibly as they do (Parveen, Yogita, Sachin, etc). She advocates a good, sound knocking around the doors of fame as a recipe for steady, reliable performances

Dinesh Nagar



A COUPLE of years ago actor Vijayakumar would have pledged his "loyalty" to MGR in his own blood. The young actor who's married to Manjula, one of MGR's celluloid favourites, not only joined MGR's party, but also propagated the ideology of his "annan" on screen. In more than a dozen films, Vijayakumar was seen wearing MGR medals. He reformed incorrigible alcoholics by showing them pictures of MGR and he sang songs extolling the virtues of his guru.

But such films didn't click. And Vijayakumar who certainly nurtured ambitions of turning into a minor MGR slowly began to train his eyes on new pastures, and even thought of leaving of the Party. But then he took this decision only after the recent election results. And even then, he didn't walk out of the Party. He slowly let the impression go around that he was planning to leave MGR's fold. His presence at Sivaji Ganesan's son's wedding, and his anxiety to pose for pictures along with Karunanidhi and Sivaji provided enough clues as to how his mind was working. The diehard MGR fans and also the troublemakers didn't stomach Vijayakumar's "betrayal". On March 2, the day the AIADMK organised a huge rally to protest against the dissolution of the state assembly, posters and hoardings of Vijayakumar's forthcoming films were torn, and some abusive phone calls were made to his wife. This might have made Vijayakumar rather shy. For quite some time now, he has been in the "dog-house", and now since he's in the "limelight", he hopes that some producers will realise that he's alive—and is being kicked around by unruly movie fans.

A YEAR after his maiden venture was released, M. G. C. Sukumar, nephew of MGR (whom he tries to imitate) released another film, *Karadi*. But the emphasis seemed to be on the bear, and Sukumar who carries a beer-barrel in place of his stomach, seemed totally lost in the film. Well, in spite of the bear's presence, the film hasn't

made much of an impact: not even on children.

WHAT if Sivaji Ganesan has decided to leave Manmohan Desai's *Desh Premee*? After all, his ambition to act in a Hindi film was fulfilled years ago when he was given a meaty role in Sridhar's *Dharti*. The film flopped badly, and Sivaji must have thought that *Desh Premee* would make him famous all over the country. And now that he has quit the film after some misunderstandings cropped up, he gives the impression that he was least interested in the venture.

Frankly speaking every South Indian hero or heroine has the strong urge to succeed in Hindi films. Even MGR had a couple of his films dubbed in Hindi. One

of them was even entitled *Love in Kashmir* but these films didn't do well.

THE dusky actress sponsored by an editor cum producer just couldn't make it but her "godfather" used to keep her happy by his generous gifts: never mind, the highly puritanical and inoralistic stories he penned. But then the man got too ambitious, and produced a lavish Hindi film which proved an utter failure. Now he's making a quickie in Tamil with new faces but his favourite mare isn't in it. Won't she be worried by his cold attitude? I bet she's going bonkers.

RATHI AGNIHOTRI is excited about two of her new films. *Utlasa Paravaigal* pairs her with Kamalanathan,

and the film has had an excellent opening. The second film's her maiden Kannada venture *Kainaga* in which she's paired with Vishnuvarahan. And of course the prized film is *Aur Ek Ithhas*, a remake of an all-time Telugu hit *Maro Charitra*.

RAJNI SHARMA (of *Balika Boahu*) is yet another Bombay star who's looking around for a break in Tamil and Telugu films. Apart from *Kashmir Kadali* in Tamil in which she's paired with up-coming hero Rajkumar, she has a couple of Telugu films on hand.

MALATHI, the small-time Kannada starlet who was seen in *Kanneshwara Rama* and *Kaadu Kudure* isn't exactly busy these days. And she would have gladly accepted a role in M. S. Sathyu's much discussed, up-coming Kannada film *Bora*. But she claims some jealous people gave the impression to Sathyu that she was busy with a couple of other units and hence she couldn't give suitable dates.

Rathi: all set to create history with "Aur Ek Ithas"



IS it a hit or a flop? This is a regular question that's asked about *Kallukkul Iram*, a film sponsored by director Bharatiraja, whose last four films have been hits. Directed by his cameraman P. S. Nivas, the new film has also featured Bharatiraja in a pivotal role. The first week's collections were truly impressive and the black market was cheerful. But many among the audience yawned and a few even walked out. But then such things did happen in the case of his previous film *Niram Maratha Pookal*: pronounced a immediate flop, it slowly warmed up and continued doing reasonably good business for 20 weeks at a stretch.

GIRISH KASARA-
VALLIPS second venture *Akramana* in Kannada was a slick affair compared to his first, *Ghatashraddha*. But the film couldn't do very well, even though it was exempted from taxes.

Beginning March 23

This week the Sun is in Pisces, Venus is in Aries, Mars, Rahu and Jupiter are conjoined in Leo and Saturn alone is in Virgo. Rahu and Uranus are in Scorpio. Mercury and Kuru are in Aquarius. The Moon will be moving through Cancer, Leo and Virgo from Gemini.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20) You will have several excellent opportunities to expand your activities. You will be praised by all. Let your own intuition be your guide to fortune. You will also benefit through secret association or information and by travel. Your professional career will continue to prosper and your work will now be recognised. A happy and auspicious journey is also indicated. **Good dates:** 23, 25, 28 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) Your home front will be a source of joy and happiness. Lovers are likely to come up against new hurdles. Elderly people will stand in the way and guide you. Some may get transfer orders in the near future. Letters will bring good news from distant places. Businessmen are advised to go in for new contracts and acquire stocks to seek profits. **Good dates:** 24, 26, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 5, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** West.

GEMINI (May 21 — June 21) This week will be slightly difficult and trying. Guard against quarrels and accidents. Curb impetuosity and watch finances, and correspondence closely. Avoid over-strain. This week is unfavourable for making auspicious arrangements. Some success will be registered at the weekend. Deal tactfully with those in authority. **Good dates:** 24, 25, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 9 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.

CANCER (June 22 — July 22) You will gain in diverse, unexpected ways. A journey may provide a solution to your problems. Relatives and new friends will prove very helpful. Many will win promotions through timely hunches. Your own intuition can be your best guide. Elders and female relatives will benefit you. You may inherit property. Avoid litigation and answer all letters promptly. **Good dates:** 23, 24, 25 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 9 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South-west.

LEO (July 23 — August 22) A favourable week is predicted for you. Somebody may try to deceive you. Exercise caution in your dealings with the opposite sex. Elders and family-friends will prove encouraging. Some people will win laurels in games and sports. Partners and spouses will play an exceptionally big part in your life. People in services are advised to accept transfer orders. **Good dates:** 24, 25 and 26. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 12. **Favourable direction:** West.

VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) You are advised to conserve your resources and consolidate all recent gains. Your professional and financial affairs will continue to prosper and promotion too is on the cards. Follow your own intuition. Original business methods will bring success in all your undertakings. Your achievements will be praised by all your friends and relatives. **Good dates:** 23, 26, 27 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 5, 3 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North.

LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) Your prospects are very bright. Good fortune will be accompanied by domestic bliss for most Librans. Some unreasonable opposition on the part of an old person of the opposite sex is to be expected. Your outlook is now completely changed and your achievements will be praised by all. Push your affairs to the utmost and forge ahead on all fronts. **Good dates:** 23, 24, 25 and 27. **Lucky numbers:** 10, 5 and 9. **Favourable direction:** East.

SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) A beneficial change of job or residence is not unlikely. This week will prove to be a happy one. Pay extra attention to business details and take the advice of elders. Travel and push business to the utmost. Auspicious arrangements will be finalised at home. Take care not to arouse the hostility of your employers and those in authority. **Good dates:** 23, 26, 27 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 8 and 6. **Favourable directions:** West and North.

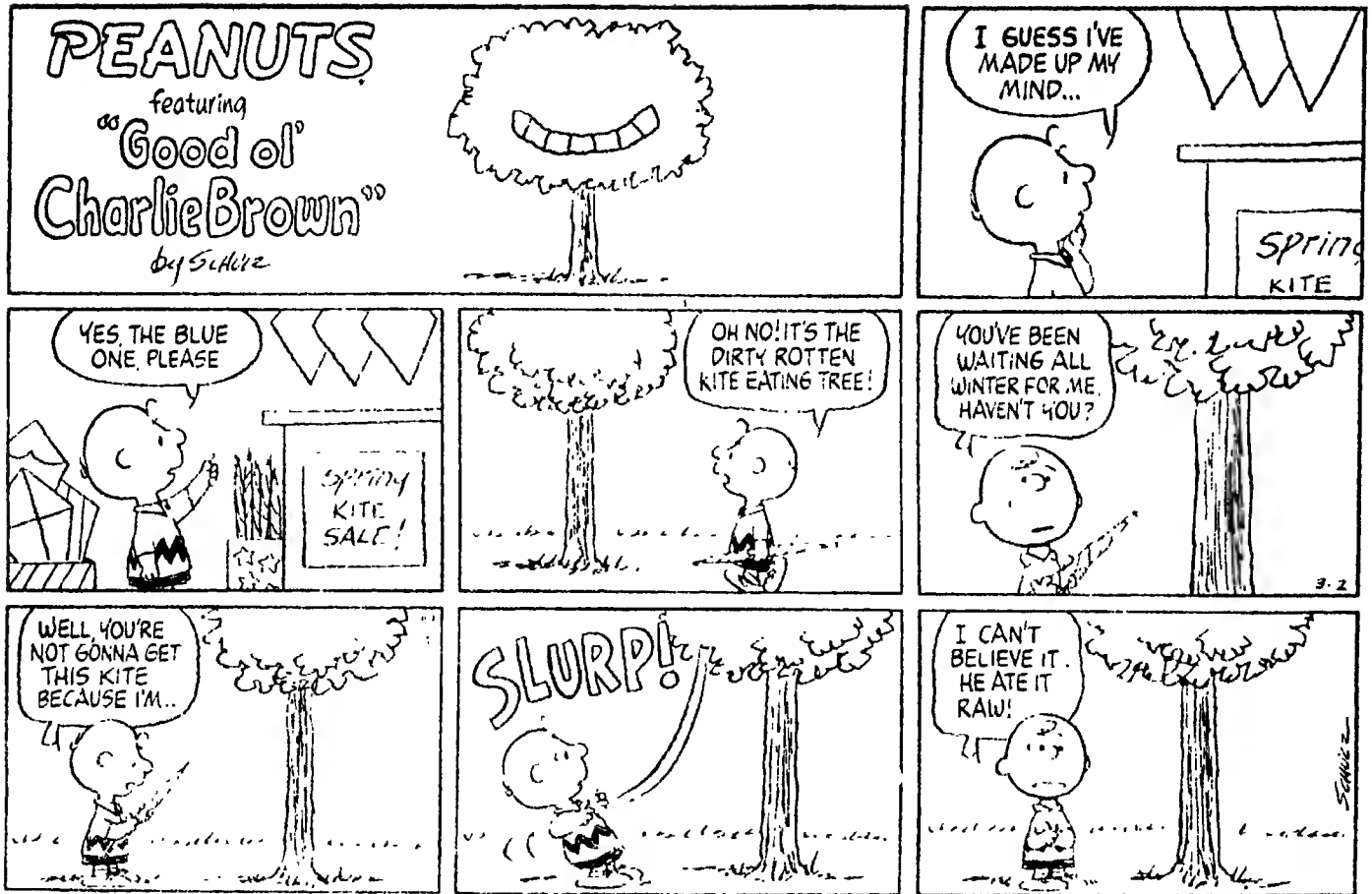
SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) You may suffer a small loss this week. Close relatives may prove very annoying but do not lose your temper. Otherwise, this will be a fortunate week. Exercise care in legal matters. Opposition from an old person is indicated. Be content to mark time and do not antagonise your employer. Your health will improve and letters will bring good news. **Good dates:** 24, 26 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 6, 3 and 5. **Favourable direction:** South.

CAPRICORN (October 23 — January 20) Once again your fortune will spring from your own intuition. Hunches will prove an excellent guide to success. Many will win promotions through their own efforts. You will soon undertake a short journey. Romance is indicated. After a minor setback your business and financial affairs will continue their successful run. The domestic scene will give you pleasure. **Good dates:** 24, 25 and 28. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 7 and 11. **Favourable direction:** East.

AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) Your outlook is brighter than last week. This week unexpected upheavals, long journeys and immense gains are indicated. Your financial affairs will continue to prosper. Exercise circumspection and watchfulness in dealings with elders and strangers. Changes, travel, law and property matters favour you. You will be successful in your dealings with people of the opposite sex. **Good dates:** 23, 25, 28 and 29. **Lucky numbers:** 4, 10 and 7. **Favourable direction:** West.

PISCES (February 20 — March 20) Expected and unexpected developments or changes in your life should bring in a lot of happiness and good fortune. On the business front you will make rapid progress. Womenfolk in the family may give you cause for worry. You may have to play host this weekend. **Good dates:** 25 and 27. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 9 and 10. **Favourable direction:** North.

M. B. RAMAN



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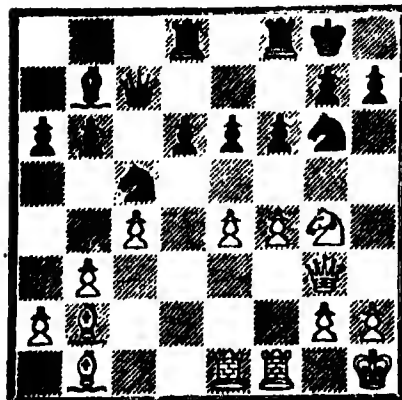
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chess

Vilela (Black)



Hartston (White) to move

Position after Black's 24th move

Controlled aggression

ENGLISH PLAYERS rarely have the opportunity to compete in the Soviet Union. Part of the reason is that, despite the great chess activity in that part of the world, comparatively few international competitions are held there. Most Soviet tournaments are played within the framework of regional or national championship systems and so do not entail the invitation of overseas players.

However, in 1975, with the aid of the Robert Silk Chess Fellowship, I had the good fortune to obtain an invitation to the Alekhine Memorial Tournament. This was quite a coup as the only other English player ever to take part in this event was Harry Golombek in 1956. More recently, also with the aid of the Robert Silk Fellowship, Bill Hartston took part in this year's Keres Memorial Tournament in Tallinn. As always with Soviet tournaments the event was very strong but Bill emerged with a highly creditable 50 per cent score with only Petrosyan 12 (from 16); Tal, Vaganian 11; Bronstein 10; Sax and Veingold 9½ ahead of him.

Bill Hartston will probably be most familiar to readers as the highly entertaining co-presenter of BBC2's 'The Master Game'. Just a few years ago he was undoubtedly the strongest player in the country and, although he may since have dropped one or two places in the English rankings, his play is nevertheless probably stronger now than then. I give a good illustration of his controlled aggression taken from Tallinn.

White: W. R. Hartston, Black: J. Vilela (Cuba).

Keres Memorial Tournament, Tallinn 1979. Queen's Indian Defence.

1. P-Q4, N-KB3; 2. N-KB3, B-K3; 3. P-QB4, P-QN3; 4. P-K3, B-N2; 5. B-Q3; Aptly enough this move was an old favourite of Keres.

6. . . . P-B4; 6. O-O, B-K2; 7. N-B3, P-QR3; 8. P-QN3, P-Q3; 9. B-N2, QN-Q2; Black is constructing a 'hedgehog', but it is not very effective against White's set-up.

10. Q-K2, O-O; 11. QR-Q1, R-K1; 12. P-K4, P x P; 13. N x P, N-B1; Larsen once said that you never get mated with a knight on B1, but this game proves to be the exception.

14. P-B4, N(3)-Q2; 15. K-R1, Q-B2; 16. B-N1, QR-Q1; 17. Q-R6, B-KB3; 18. Q-R3, Q-B4; His first sally beyond the third rank, but not a very successful one.

19. N-B2! A sneaky retreat threatening as it does to win the QP with B-R3.

19. . . . Q-B2; 20. N-K3! The arrival of the knight on N4 will be very unpleasant for Black.

20. . . . N-B4; 21. N-N4, B x N; A drastic solution. Hartston now quickly demonstrates that Black has no answer to the two bishops.

22. Q x B, P-B3; 23. Q-N3, N-N3; 24. R(Q1)-K1, R-KB1; (DIAGRAM) 25. P-B5, P x P; Or 25. . . . N-K4; 26. P x P, N x P(K3); 26. N x P+.

26. N x P+! R x N; Absolute desperation, but after 26. . . . P x N; 27. P x P, the bishop pair will tear Black to pieces.

27. B x R, N x KP; 28. B x N, P x B; 29. B x R, Q x B; 30. R-Q1, Q-K1; 31. Q x QP; Resigns. He is mated after 31. . . . P-K6; 32. Q-K6+! Q x Q; 33. R-Q6+.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

THOUGH bridge writers seldom comment on the fact, the most difficult part of the game is to discard well on an opponent's long suit. You have to gauge the declarer's distribution and you have to tell partner what is happening. The defenders on both sides tailed when both Norway and France reached Seven Spades on these cards:

Dealer, South. Love all.

♠ 5 3 2		♥ 8
♥ J 8 5 3	N	♥ 10 9 6 4
♦ Q 7 4	W	♦ J 10 9 8 5 2
♣ 10 9 6	S	♣ Q J
		♠ A Q 10 4
		♥ K Q 7 2
		♦ K 3
		♣ A K 3

When France played in Seven Spades from the South position, West led a trump. To ruff a heart in the long trump hand obviously gains nothing, so Label played off five rounds of trumps, discarding ♠ 3. East let go a heart, subjecting his partner to a criss-cross squeeze.

♠ —		♥ —
♥ A		♥ 10 9 8
♦ 8		♦ J 10
♠ 8 7 5 4 2	N	♣ Q J
♥ J 8 5 3	W	
♦ —	S	
♣ 10 9 8		
		♠ K Q 7 2
		♦ K
		♣ A K

The next diamond destroys West.

At the other table the declarer had things easier. West, not seeing the value of his ♣ 10 9 8, let go a club on the fifth spade. Using ♥ A for entry, the declarer made five spades, five clubs, two diamonds and one heart.

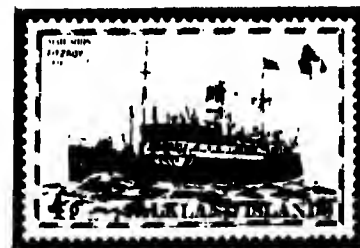
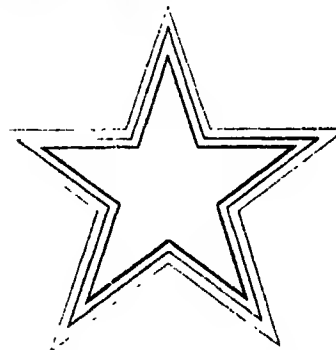
No doubt East, at both tables, should have let go his two clubs. These could hardly win a trick and the situation becomes immediately clear to partner. But West, at the second table, where North was the declarer, could have drawn an inference from the play of the five trumps. The loser in the North hand could only be a club, because obviously a losing diamond could have been ruffed.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



BY ITS NATURE, philately is one of the cultural pursuits that blind people cannot enjoy. But an interesting and thought-provoking collection can be formed of stamps which have been issued in tribute to blind celebrities, among them John Milton, Leonhard Euler, the Swiss mathematician, and Homer, who is traditionally supposed to have become blind. Louis Braille, who has already been honoured by French and Russian stamps, is portrayed on a new Luxembourg stamp which marks the 125th anniversary of his death. A companion stamp honours Marguerite de Busbach, a seventeenth century pioneer of girls' education in Luxembourg.



A NEW series of definitive stamps being issued in the Falkland Islands features some of the ships which have carried mail and cargo for the islanders during the 145 years of British administration. The 4p stamp (above) shows the Fitzroy, which was built at Leith in 1831 and sailed between Port Stanley, in the Falklands, and Montevideo, in Uruguay, until 1957, when it was brought home to Grays, Essex, to be broken up. One of the smallest ships featured in the series is the Foam, on the 20p stamp. A Portsmouth-built schooner of 88 tons, it averaged six return voyages every year between Port Stanley and Montevideo during the 1880s. The new stamps replace a series featuring wild flowers of the Falklands, which has been in use for 10 years.

C. WY. HILL



BANGALORE : Ignorance of the fact that the buses of the State Road Transport Corporation have no brakes is as inexcusable as the ignorance of law. This was the lesson that a former minister of state was taught by a driver of the KSRTC recently. An incident which had imparted him this lesson was narrated in the state assembly by M. C. Nanaiah during a discussion on a bus accident near Nelamangala. According to Mr Nanaiah, he had signalled to a bus coming from the opposite direction to allow him pass the narrow bridge he had already entered in his car. But, he was shocked to find that the bus did not stop, but came towards the car. The driver of the bus after a while approached him and questioned if he had any sense and if he did not care for his life. The next question posed by the driver was whether he was not aware that the KSRTC buses do not have brakes, Mr Nanaiah could do nothing but apologise to the driver—*Indian Express* (J. Sreekantha, Shimoga)

JAMMU : A male baby born during the eclipse period was named as Graham Singh. Several names were suggested to the father by his friends but he has agreed to call the baby Graham Kumar. He said that will remind him that his son took birth at the time of the eclipse—*Deccan Herald* (R. Mulathy, Bangalore)

BELLARY : A new mode of punishment has been evolved by the Sholapur police to curb the sale of cinema tickets in the black market. A slate with the names of the blackmarketeer and the film written in bold letters on it, is hung to the neck of the person

and he is paraded through the main streets of the city. The new method started by Messers A. S. Inamdar, SP, and Sagar, Sub-Inspector, has rid the city of black marketing in cinema tickets. Theatre owners cooperated with the police department and college students were among those found selling tickets in the black market. A similar mode of punishment is being adopted to curb gambling, preparation of illicit liquor and pick pockets—*Deccan Herald* (K. P. Raju, Bangalore)

SRINAGAR : The people of Kashmir had a heart-easing experience when an old Hindu woman was carried to the burning ghat by Muslims. They also requisitioned the services of a Hindu priest who performed the last rites of the old woman. The woman who belonged to Zaindar Mohalla in Srinagar had reportedly none to look after her. Her own son had also left her to the mercy of God. But Muslim neighbours came forward to dispose of the dead woman's body. They also defrayed all the expenses at the burning ghat—*Indian Express* (D. R. Sarkar, Meerut)

BANGALORE : Complaints that official machinery moves at snail's pace is no news these days. But its operation at agonisingly slow speed afflicts both layman and legislator became evident in the Assembly today (February 27) when a member's question came up for hearing after three years. The member himself wondered whether there was any relevance for him to seek an answer after such a long period. Speaker, P. Venkatarani advised the member to take it in the stride since "such delays" do occur. The question tabled by Mr V. M. Ghadi (Congress I) in 1977 had sought the Government reply on difficulties caused to farmers due to the Marketing Society stopping collection of levy paddy in Huliya taluk of North Kanara. The question hour in fact ended within half an hour since very few questions were listed on the agenda. When Mr B. B. Sayanak (MES) complained against this, Mr Venkatarani said he would pull up the departments concerned and see that the replies were furnished promptly—*Deccan Herald* (Sivaram G., Bangalore)

I WILL not bite you — you are free to go in—Sagjay Gandhi to Subramaniam Swamy at the door of the Central Hall of Parliament. Quoted in *Surya*

THIS was the best time to try and win a Parliamentary seat—Arun Nehru, Mrs Gandhi's nephew on his victory at the Rae Bareilly by-election

TO a certain extent Mrs Gandhi is a prisoner of the system in which she has to operate—S. Nihal Singh in *India Today*

NEVER say die—Devaraj Urs on the prospects of his Party's performance in the coming Assembly polls

A POLITICAL Party has the right to ask its members not to join even a cultural organisation—Chandra Shekhar, Janata Party President

WE are proud of our association with the RSS which ingrained in us the spirit of selfless service and patriotism—Nanaji Deshmukh, Janata Party General Secretary

ONE cannot imagine that a Belchi or a Parasbigha, a Narainpur or a Pipra can take place in West Bengal—*Mainstream*

THERE is no way in which the Soviets or anyone else can resist the power of God. Something terrible is going to happen to the Soviets, something supernatural and nothing to do with military force—Muhammad Ali

WHENEVER a country takes to the road of radical socio-economic reforms, the CIA barges in—Babrak Karmal in an interview with *Blitz*

DO YOU suppose we talked about oil in bed?—Christina Onassis on her short-lived marriage to Sergei Kauzov

UNLESS the commercial cinema suffers a severe setback in terms of audience attendance, I don't see any great hope for theatre in the 1980s — Naseeruddin Shah, noted theatre personality and film actor

SHE is not a feminist. She's not even a woman. She is a machine. She's been a Tory ever since she was a child—Germaine Greer on Margaret Thatcher in *Newsweek*

ONCE kissing is liberalised, let the kiss fall on the lip and not on any other part of the human anatomy—Mrinal Sen

dia abroad

LONDON : Mystery shrouds the deaths of a young Indian doctor and his wife at their home in Abergavenny in Wales in the third week of February. They died from stab wounds. The bodies of Nargund (28) and his wife Shashikala (25) were found in the bolted bedroom of their flat on Tuesday (February 19) when the authorities of

Neville Hall, in which the doctor was working, sent their staff to find out why he had not turned up for work. According to police reports, the couple had gone to Heathrow airport on February 16 to take a flight to India but for some reason cancelled their journey and returned home—*The Statesman*

HONEST TIMES

THE daily newspapers in the capital did an unprecedented thing by declaring a holiday on the occasion of Holi, so readers had to go without newspapers on March 3. The *National Herald* was the only paper which was published on the day after Holi. While most of the papers announced on their front pages that there would be no edition on March 3 because of a holiday on Holi (March 2), one paper was honest enough to admit the reason for the unusual decision. Only the *Times of India* announced that the decision to skip an edition was due to an "acute newsprint shortage". The dailies in the capital are reportedly considering the possibilities of adopting the European system of a six-day week in view of the newsprint supply position. While it is too early to say whether the new scheme will materialise at all, the attempt on the part of one of the dailies to cash in on the inability of others to come out on March 3 backfired and that paper too was closed for Holi. This newspaper suffered a prolonged strike last year, when it reportedly helped other groups tide over their newsprint crisis by supplying them newsprint from its quota at no premium. This management now went to all those managements seeking a "return" for the favour done last year. The smaller newspapers wriggled out by pleading that the amount of newsprint needed by this large group for one day's printing was perhaps equivalent to a small paper's weekly requirement. Two large groups were blunt in their refusal. One of them said that newsprint was available, but at a premium. When it was pointed out that the strike-bound management had not sought any premium while supplying newsprint last year, the Marwari owner of the other group is supposed to have said, "If you were foolish in business, that does not mean I should follow suit". Another group was more candid. Newsprint was available in exchange for the favour shown last year, but only after March 3, they said, pointing out that they could not allow one of the competitors to cash in on their inability to bring out an edition.

DISAPPOINTMENTS

COLD WATER was thrown on the hopes of many Ministerial aspirants twice within a week in early March when C. M. Stephen and Veerendra Patil were inducted into the Union Cabinet along with four junior Ministers. Apart from bigwigs like H. N. Bhatnagar, who had cause to feel that they were being kept out of the Cabinet in order to belittle them, there were many young MPs who were hoping to make it to the Ashoka Hall of Rashtrapati Bhavan before the commencement of the Budget Session on March 11. C. M. Stephen was inducted because he



C. M. Stephen

had been promised a berth in the Cabinet as soon as he was elected to the Lok Sabha. Although he was expected to get an important portfolio, he instead relieved Bhatnagar Narayan Singh, the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, of the additional Communications portfolio. Apparently Mrs. Gandhi did not want a debacle of the sort when the Rajya Sabha appended the vote of thanks to the President in the last session. Therefore, apart from ensuring that B. N. Singh devotes all his attention to the Parliamentary Affairs portfolio, she has made Sitaram Kesari as his junior Minister. Pranab Mukherjee also being in charge of the crucial Civil Supplies

portfolio urgently needed an experienced junior Minister like Z. R. Ansari, who was earlier a junior Minister in the Commerce Ministry as well. But the most significant appointment was that of Patil as Petroleum Minister. The Works and Housing Minister, P. C. Sethi, had been holding temporary charge of this important portfolio and being a former Petroleum Minister, was devoting most of his time to his additional charge. He has also expressed the desire to quit the Housing portfolio in favour of Petroleum. But his public actions and statements in the recent past must have embarrassed the PM, who did not perhaps want Sethi to be given a portfolio like Petroleum, on which many questions are bound to be asked in the coming session due to the diesel and kerosene shortages.

EFFICIENCY AT PREMIUM

THE AICC (I) headquarters at New Delhi's 24 Akbar Road has been placed under efficient management. B. Dutta, Mrs. Gandhi's former security officer, has been appointed the administrative officer of the office. Dutta, a former Deputy Superintendent of police attached to Mrs. Gandhi prior to 1977, was retained as her security man even after her defeat. He retired from service a year ago and Mrs. Gandhi's confidence in him was such that she immediately offered him a job in her personal secretariat. Dutta's efficiency was evident during the days when the Lok Sabha results started pouring in early January. Even before the police authorities realised the possible outcome of the initial trends broadcast by All India Radio, Dutta had streamlined the security arrangements at the "likely PM's" house by putting up rope barricades, to control crowds and deputing personal staff of the house to guard the barriers. Now that he has been posted at the AICC (I) headquarters, it is evident that Mrs. Gandhi wants to ensure that the Party office functions efficiently. His presence has also scared many; after all, he is a former security policeman.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

**Just a little something.
To show you care.**



**Remember,
precious things
come in
small parcels.
With a
small name.
HMT.**

You'd hate to admit it ...
even to yourself.

But you do take your wife
just a little bit for granted.

You're not exactly the
tyrant about the house.
But you do know that your
way is the way it's going
to be!

And it's not that you
don't appreciate all that
your wife does for you.
It's just that somehow you
forget to tell her.

Perhaps the time has
come to do it.

Now, you're not going
to embarrass yourself with
a long speech on the
subject.

No, no.

Just a little HMT will say
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into it talks. For you.

So give her an HMT
today.

She'll treasure it for
all the years to come.

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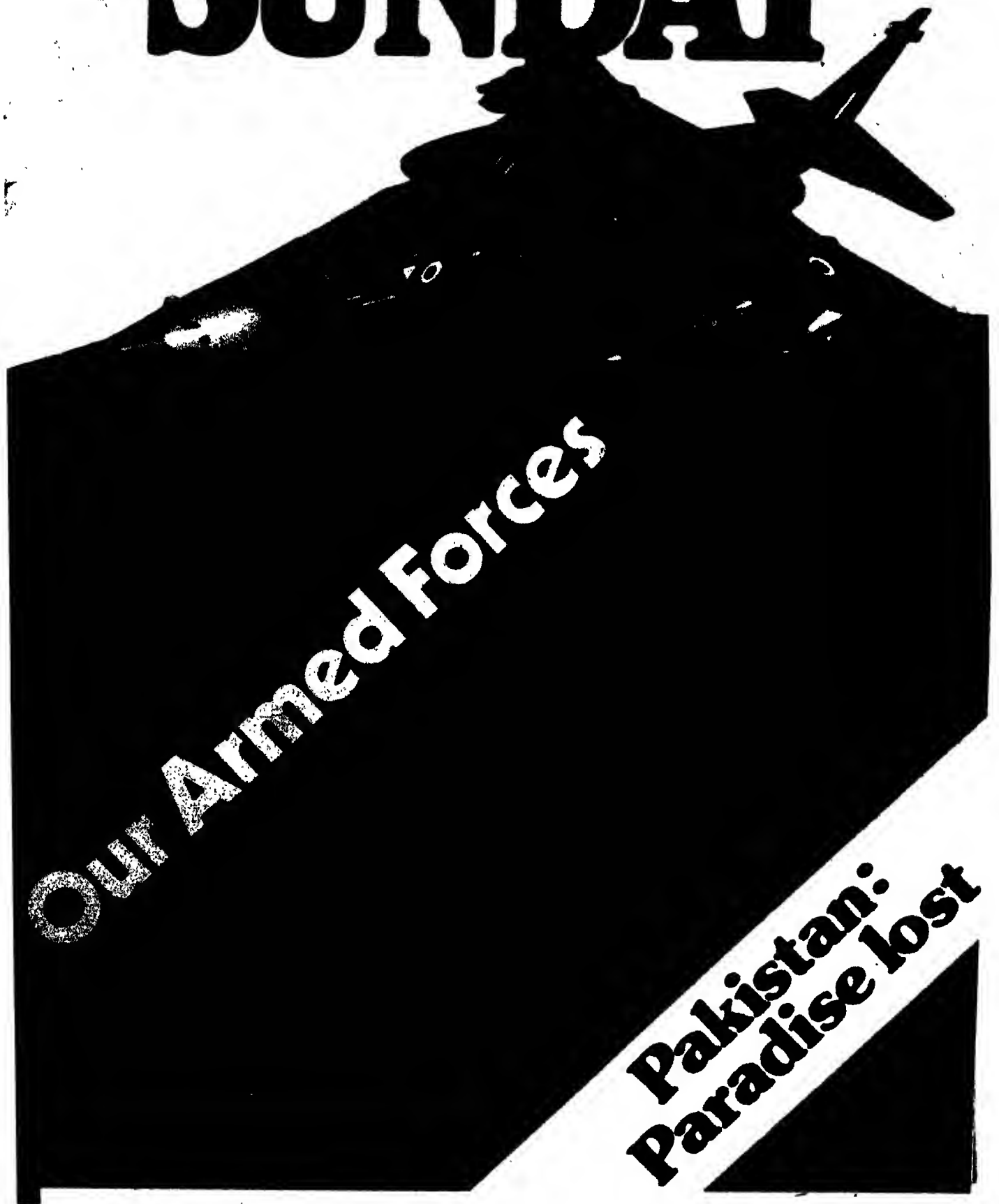


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Paradise lost**

THE EYE-CATCHERS



HINDON

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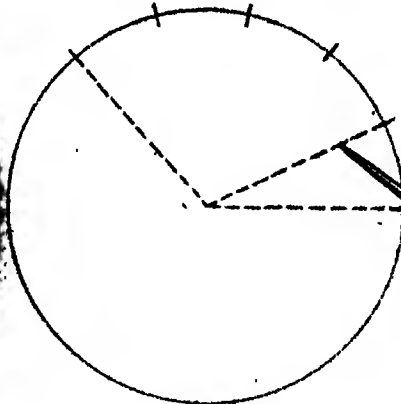
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DCM
TEXTILES

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to get a genuine Parle Monaco biscuit.**



**Data: Being crisp,
fresh
and popular,
Parle biscuits
have many
imitators.**

To prove that: You can make a biscuit
look like Parle, but you can't
make it taste like one.

Proof: a) The purchase test:

The first thing to remember:
Parle Monaco biscuits are
never sold loose. They come
hygienically packed in rolls,
square cartons and tins—
to retain their inimitable
freshness.

b) The package test:

It's easy to recognise
the attractive Parle Monaco
pack on any shelf. To make
doubly sure, check out the
name P-A-R-L-E on the pack.

c) The taste test:

Take a bite of the biscuit.
If it's crisp and flaky
you can be sure it's a
genuine Parle Monaco.

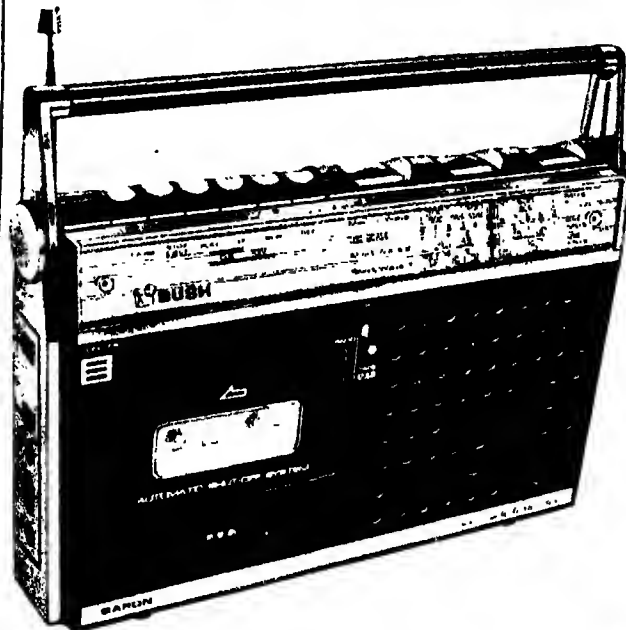
Q.E.D.



PARLE Gluco PARLE MONACO PARLE Krackjack

Their sum total is the finest enjoyment in biscuits.

**The largest selling
two-in-one:**



**The second
largest selling
two-in-one:**



**We don't care which brands are
in the third, fourth, fifth
and other places.**

Would you?

The only reason one Bush two in one has sold more than the other Bush two in one is that it was introduced in the market earlier.

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BUSH
The No.1 two-in-ones.



Our armed forces have come a long way since the debacle of 1962 and today there is a quiet confidence in Delhi over the country's security; this notwithstanding the new tensions in the region after the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. What is the substance of our defence preparedness vis-a-vis China and Pakistan?

Robert Mugabe's massive victory in the Zimbabwe polls astounded everybody. The whites, whose shock bordered on trauma. The blacks, whose elation knew no bounds. And even the British whose hopes for a broad-based multi-Party coalition evaporated.



Forty years ago the Muslim League passed a resolution that laid the foundation stone for the ultimate creation of Pakistan. But Pakistan, though a viable state, did not solve the 'Muslim problem' in the subcontinent. Today Indian Muslims are settling down to a long hard struggle for a better deal for themselves within India.

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Freud to fantasy

PRITISH NANDY'S article "Sex and the sizzling sanyasi" (February 24) eloquently explained Rajneesh's philosophy that at a certain point, both experiences, the sexual and divine, mingle and become one, which is then samadhi. The Bhagwan has most intelligently understood Freud's interpretation of human psychology and sexual theses, which considerably influenced modern society. Where Freud ended, the Bhagwan took up the thread to develop a novel theory of salvation. Now, in pursuit of a fuller life and samadhi, frustrated men and women from East and West,

even their children, are flocking around the Bhagwan to realise the divine by spontaneous sexual action, and dancing naked according to free will.

Vipin Viplawi, Mongyhr

NO LOVE or samadhi can ever happen without the will of god. May I ask what the mind is? Who gives us inspiration? Nothing can happen without someone behind it, and behind all these occurrences is god. The man who realises the existence of god may explain what samadhi is. Sexual intercourse is nothing but a biological urge for satisfaction. Besides love comes into play in a variety of experiences, not sex alone.

N. R. Das Gupta, Kharagpur

MR NANDY's article was a lot of well-written mush. The impression one gets after reading it is that Bhagwan Rajneesh is a rational man with a misdirected sense of divine mission. Why doesn't he have the honesty to advertise himself as a sex-therapist, rather than a godman? Religion, one hopes, is a way to god rather than a way to achieving prolonged orgasm. God help us the day we equate the two!

S. Sanyal, Calcutta

RAJNEESH's conjecture that man "had his first luminous glimpse of Samadhi during the experience of intercourse" is far from the truth. How can one concentrate on two things at a time? His argument that during sexual intercourse there comes a moment of climax when the mind is devoid of thought is unconvincing: one does not experience such a moment at all. What concerns

the Acharya is not the problem of achieving "Nirvana" but controlling the duration of intercourse. To my mind, the only remedy to this problem is circumcision, as practised by the Jews and Muslims. However, this has nothing to do with religion, and is only a sexual necessity.

Men like Rajneesh are only misleading innocent people. He is one of a vast network of so-called avatars like the Sai Baba, Bal' Yogeshwar, Mehar Baba, Mahesh Yogi and others who have flourished in the post-Independence era, and are exploiting religious sentiments. Rajneesh is a political agent who is discouraging socialism. It is painful to equate him with Jesus or the Buddha.

Sreenivas Sharma, Calcutta

THIS is the finest expose you have published in a long time, even better than the author's article on the Sai Baba you published a few months back. What is amusing is to see one cult figure take on another. SUN-DAY doesn't need a 'demolition squad' anymore. Now you should ask Satyajit Ray to review M. F. Husain's work and Ravi Shankar to write on M. S. Subbalakshmi!

S. K. Bhadury, Bangalore

I HAVE great sympathy for Pritish Nandy's intelligence, wide knowledge and good vocabulary, but what he has produced is all humbug. Anyway, thanks to him for showing the way from roadside sex, to Rajneesh's Sex Knowledge. Nandy is on a path that leads man to insanity. Let the author experience emptiness for "a while", and he would start realising the ultimate truth.

Swami Ram Vedant, Tananagar

All bull

PRITISH NANDY is a glorious addition to your contributing team. A few pages of his book review appear to be more rewarding than the platitudes of the popular godman, Rajneesh himself. But while the idea of encouraging this kind of "intangible export" may augur well for the nation's balance of payments, the notion that the Crotch is a gateway to the Paradise of Heaven needs to be guarded against. I would even dare to draw a parallel between these neo-tantrics—for tantra is what the bhagwan practises, though disguisedly—and Satanists. Again, it is darned funny that one can cohabit at all with "attention betwixt the eyeballs". This, to twist the idiom, is surely no cock and all bull (I mean, the eye).

R. Ramalingam, Calcutta

I THOUGHT Mr Nandy was open-minded and liberal. Instead of commenting on the present activities in the Rajneesh Ashram, he has chosen

to write about a book "From Sex to Superconsciousness", published as long back as 1969. The author seems to have read very little of the Bhagwan's literature, and even so, misinterpreted it. He is typically conservative, and bases his ideas on just one book. All the same, he has done well to bring out a few good traits of the Bhagwan.

Nidhi Bhargava, Allahabad

MR NANDY has tried to publicise Sree Rajneesh at the cost of the harmony of young minds. He has described Rajneesh as the sexiest baba and supported his views about reaching god through free sex. Both these notions are incorrect. Rajneesh is neither handsome nor sexy. And the free sex he preaches will lead people to ruination. I am surprised to learn that Sree Rajneesh preaches ways to copulate for three hours at a stretch.

K. Mishra, Patna

RAJNEESH is convinced that prostitutes and perverts exist in direct proportion to a society's civilisation.

Assuming civilisation to be an advanced stage of social development, the change from barbarism to refined, enlightened living, what refinement or enlightenment did Sodom and Gomorrah experience that saw their total destruction? All socialistic revolutions, be they Christian or proletarian, preach civilisation and enlightenment. To what extent do condemned prostitution and sodomy exist in these societies? Alternately, if we renounce civilisation, will according to the sanyasi, prostitutes and perverts diminish in the same proportion?

Violet Mac Gibbon, Calcutta

MOST people, as I see it, are sexually repressed hypocrites and that is why they see the Bhagwan as a symbol of sex. But we do not bother for them. I can only say that the time is fast approaching when human history shall be divided into periods "Before Rajneesh" and "After Rajneesh". Only those who recognise the significance of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh are wise.

Swami Aqeh Bharti, Satna

Truth about a lie

CONGRATULATIONS to T. N. Kaul for his candid, rational and well-written article "Will the real Kissinger please stand up?" (February 24), wherein he revealed how Henry Kissinger, shrewd as he was, distorted facts about the 1971 Indo-Pak war, and Indo-American relations. It is deplorable that a diplomat of his calibre should manufacture such blatant lies. Even the candid American Press commented about his book ("The Kissinger Years"): "Kissinger ... revives an eight-year-old lie". Mr Kaul at one point stated commendably: "Modern diplomacy must have some basis of honesty and sincerity". But when politics creeps into diplomacy, credibility automatically suffers. Also diplomacy void of credibility is like political debauchery. Mr Kissinger underplayed the stances India adopted to persuade Yahya Khan to find

an amicable settlement to the problem of East Pakistan to ease tension in the subcontinent. Mrs Gandhi's missions to other neighbouring countries was a commendable step hailed by all right-thinking men. One wonders how the Americans shut their eyes to the repeated provocations of the Pakistan junta to drag India into war with them. Mr Kissinger was the architect of Nixon's policy of friendship with China, and by creating hostility in the Indian subcontinent, thought he could achieve this better. Needless to say, the attempt finally failed.

Mr Kaul rightly points out that "Relations between countries like America and India must not depend on the personal likes and dislikes of individuals who happen to occupy positions of power in either country." It is a fact that the people of America have an entirely different opinion of the US policy towards India. *Jasvinder Singh, New Delhi*

Medical mistake

APROPOS of the "This India" item on a "Fake vasectomy operation" in Gorakhpur (February 17, 1980). The case may not be a fake vasectomy but actually a failed vasectomy. The presence or otherwise of a scar on the scrotum indicates whether the person has been operated on or not. What could have then gone wrong? Firstly, the doctor might not have cut the vas deference, the tube carrying the male spermatozoa from the testes to the urethra, at the base of the penis through the spermatic cord. This is quite likely since the spermatic cord looks like a bag of worms, especially if the veins and lymphatics are dilated for any reason. One of these strands might quite likely be mistaken for the vas, and cut. For this reason, a doctor, after cutting the vas, should inject a fluid through one end of

the cut portion and confirm the presence of a lumen by observing whether it jets out through the other end or not. To be doubly sure the cut portion should be sent to a pathologist for histopathological confirmation. Even when the cut portion is found to be the vas deference, there is still the possibility of an anomalous double vas existing congenitally, in the same spermatic cord. This will continue to carry the sperms (vasectomy has to be done on both right and left sides).

Similar failure to cut the right tube can also occur in a female undergoing tubectomy. In fact, my own aunt had given birth to a baby girl—her sixth child—after tubectomy. In such cases the husband must surely be medically knowledgeable. An ordinary person would have suspected his wife's fidelity.

Dr Ravindra Kudrimoti, Hyderabad

Bad and worse

I READ with interest Ajay Bose's report "Behind the dissolution" (February 25). Once the British statesman Benjamin Disraeli, a well-known 19th century British personality, was asked to distinguish between "misfortune" and "catastrophe". Disraeli replied that if his political rival, W. Gladstone was drowned in the Thames it would be a misfortune. And if somebody happened to rescue Gladstone, it would be a catastrophe. This witty illustration reflects the trauma of the long, bitter duel between the two Parliamentary giants that went on to make the British Parliamentary process stable and strong. Similarly, one can say that the recent toppling of nine State Governments is unfortunate, but their continuance might have been

disastrous in the changed political climate.

Bijay Kumar Jaiswal, Katihar

UPTO the end of the Sixties, elections to State Assemblies were always held simultaneously with those to the Lok Sabha. Then elections to the Assemblies were delinked from those to the Lok Sabha; it was argued that the issues involved in the Lok Sabha elections were different from those in the State elections, which are generally more localised, like setting up of schools or tubewells. The questions posed to the electorate in the 1977 and 1980 Parliamentary polls were stability at the Centre and the issue of dynastic versus democratic rule. Never from any platform were the merits of one-party rule mooted, nor were either the 1977 or 1980 elections won on this slogan.

Yet, immediately on winning

Roots of revenge

I WAS shocked to read the report "Moonlight murders" (February 17) by Milap Chand Dandiya. The incidents clearly show the extent to which our country, especially the North, is obsessed with feelings of caste and revenge. The South is relatively free from such atrocities. Also, revenge appears to be common among the illiterate. I think it is not the fault of the criminals, but the fault of the government that such incidents should continue to occur: little effort has been made to spread literacy.

S. Sankaranarayanan, Coimbatore

Just great

IT WAS highly imaginative of you to have started new columns and sections just when your readers needed them. The new sections are not only useful and interesting but also provocative. The fortnightly column "Civil liberties" by A. G. Noorani promises to be useful to all readers, especially students of law like myself. Congratulations to all those behind the new columns.

B. B. Chhetri, Siliguri


Officers, not dummies

UDAYAN SHARMA's special report on "What happened to N. K. Singh" (February 10, 1980) was thought-provoking. The affair is a shame on the Central Government. Mrs Gandhi and her cohorts are known for their clandestine operations. Mr N. K. Singh was obviously victimised for his role in the Kissa Kursi Ka case. The Government should understand that civil servants are mere cogs in the wheel of the administration. Politicians should not interfere in it.

K. P. Andaran, Gobichettipalayam

massive poll victories, the victors forgot the slogans on which they won, and started ousting State Governments elected on issues of regional importance, in the control of Parties other than their own. Suppose in the ensuing elections to the nine State Assemblies the electorate once again demonstrates its political maturity and, in the light of the local issues involved, gives the limited Opposition a massive poll victory, will Mrs Gandhi, computing it with the situation in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, advise the dissolution of Parliament and seek a fresh mandate? Again, supposing in a simultaneous election to Parliament and State Assemblies, the electorate puts one Party to power in the Centre and another in majority in the States, will the Parliament or State Assemblies be dissolved?

J. Basu, Calcutta



Our Armed Forces A QUIET CONFIDENCE

By SAUMITRA BANERJEE



PARADOXICALLY, New Delhi is one of the most relaxed capitals in the world today as far as national security considerations are concerned. One hundred thousand Soviet troops are in Afghanistan. The second traditional buffer in the region after Tibet has disappeared. American Marines have taken up positions in the Gulf for the first time since 1958. A huge US armada is now stationed in the Indian Ocean region that directly impinges on India's security. Pakistan can still become an advance base of the US strategy of containing Soviet power in the Gulf region. China has been given an undetermined role in this containment policy. Thus the benign security environment which India enjoyed since 1962 has begun to change, taking on aspects of malevolence. But Mrs Gandhi has no Defence Minister and there is no evidence that any new thinking on national security has occurred either at the Cabinet level or at the level of service chiefs and senior defence officials. The mood in Delhi is one of quiet confidence. And this is reflected in the interim budget presented to the Lok Sabha on March 11. In 1980-81 India will be spending on defence 15 paise out of every rupee spent by the Government. This is one paise per rupee less than what was spent in 1979-80.

Of course, the Indian armed forces of 1980 are not what they were even a decade ago. The Indian Army has come a long way. The 7.62 SLR has replaced the 303 used in the war with China in 1962. The Jaguars are here. With 1,096,000 men in uniform India sports the world's fourth largest standing armed force. As a matter of fact the programmes of modernisation got a major boost during 1977-78. Replacement of outdated World War II weapons which started with the first defence plan of 1964-69 took place at an increased pace during this period.

The strength of the armed forces comes from the 28 infantry divisions, including 10 mountain divisions, 1880 heavy/medium tanks, 1,000 combat aircraft, one aircraft carrier, eight submarines and 32 major surface vessels. For this considerable set up, the budget allocation for 1980-81 is Rs 3,300 crores. The revised military expenditure for the year just passed is Rs 3,273 crores, an increase of Rs 223 crores over what was budgeted for. Nearly two-thirds of the budget is claimed by the Army and one third is shared between the Air Force and the Navy. It is significant that 23 per cent of the budget for the Army or, Rs 705 crores, is spent on pay and allowances of officers and men.

The overall importance of the Army notwithstanding, the Navy and Air Force have received special attention in recent times. Naval development for instance, had a low



priority in the sixties. The policy changed along with the geo-strategic changes and an almost instant growth in the importance of the seas. The super power rivalries have highlighted the need for India to enlarge its naval presence. Besides India's stakes in the off-shore areas have vastly increased with the discovery of oil. The Government has approved the indigenous construction of several warships which will partly fill the gaps in the security of the Andamans and Nicobar group of islands. The acquisition of a submarine is in a very advanced stage of decision making and the Vikrant, India's aircraft carrier, may soon have Harrier aircraft. Besides, a country like India with reasonable backing from the Air Force may not be easy to invade by sea. Although the USA succeeded in ensuring a stalemate in Korea by an amphibious landing at Inchon, no such action was taken in Vietnam. The risks have greatly increased. For the Air Force, besides the decision to induct the Jaguar there is also a proposal to acquire a new medium range transport aircraft along with licences for its manufacture in India. MI-8 helicopters are being acquired to replace the ageing MI-4s.

India's defence capabilities have been acquiring teeth over a period of 30 years without permitting military expenditure to consume a disproportionately large slice of the limited national resources. Only once during

this period, that is in the sixties after the trauma of the border war with China, did defence expenditure take a big leap forward. Soon, however, the level of defence expenditure was stabilised at one of the lowest percentages to national income in the world. At least 16 Asian and African nations spend on defence a greater percentage of their national income than India. With military expenditure at less than five per cent of the GNP, India is bracketed with Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea in Asia and West Germany, France and Sweden in Europe. As Emile Benoit has shown in his work on the relation between defence and defence expenditure in the third world, India's defence expenditure has contributed to overall economic growth, more than compensating for the diversion of foreign exchange.

THE worth of this military capability, impressive in physical and absolute terms, can be judged qualitatively only vis-a-vis the two main potential security threats facing India—Pakistan and China. To take Pakistan first, the difference in the degree of dependence on external military support between the two countries is a major factor. India has the capacity to replenish much of its own arms inventories even with lessening external assistance. Besides, there are

limits to Chinese capabilities as a supplier of arms to Pakistan, and the equipment that has been supplied is not very advanced or reliable. Even strategically, Pakistan is more vulnerable, since several of its major cities like Lahore and important road and rail links are within fairly easy access of the Indian border. Again, modern armoured forces require a substantial amount of space for manoeuvre, and Pakistan has felt the lack of this. This has led Pakistan into a strategy of defending its own territory by attacking Indian soil. This was evident in 1964 (Runn of Kutch), 1965 and 1971 (western sector). It was the Pakistani forces which struck first in armour-air assault, designed to slow down or deter any thrust into Pakistan. Now, however, Pakistan's preemptive thrust may not be penetrative as India's superiority in air power (the ratio is 4:1,) and constituting generally a more modern force, means that any future armoured thrust by Pakistan will lack any meaningful air support.

Pakistan has, however, strengthened her defence services, is engaged in a rapid arms buildup, has made good her losses in the 1971 conflict and replaced obsolete equipment. Her defence expenditure, a very high percentage of her budget, had doubled since 1971. And according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Pakistan has

been able to expand her Army by 70 per cent and now has parity with deployable Indian forces on the India-Pakistan border. Therefore, if Pakistan were to launch a zero warning attack, the danger to India is very acute. But it should also be noted that the Afghanistan crisis has, to a certain extent, lessened the tension between India and Pakistan. Following the crisis Pakistan, anticipating danger, has moved some of her troops to the Afghan border and her buildup along the Indian border has thus been lessened.

As far as the India-China military balance is concerned, the Chinese have their 18th Regular Army in Tibet with three divisions, plus four divisions of border troops. There are some other formations which are useful for defence. We have on our north-eastern border with China around ten mountain divisions. Ten against their seven might sound reasonable, especially since it is possible to reinforce them even now. Besides, our forces can seize the initiative and attack where they want along the long border. If we are to consider the Chinese equivalent of a division, then the Indian strength is much more. And the Indian border divisions include some very fine infantry battalions: Scouts, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Assam Rifles and the BSF. Backing these are many battalions capable of defending but not attacking like the CRP and armed police. So even if the Chinese bring their total to ten divisions, the Indian Army would still outnumber the attacked 2:1 and still have a margin. India has a reinforcement capability too. Around 50 infantry battalions would have at any time completed a three year stint in the mountains within the previous 12 months. Reintroducing these battalions into the mountains is fairly simple.

But China's modernisation drive of the armed forces, which is one of the four modernisations called for, could have important implications for India's defence. If Peking were to acquire the Harrier vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aircraft, which Britain has agreed to sell to China, it would certainly enhance Peking's capabilities, both on the Indian and Soviet borders. The deployment of Chinese Spey fitted F-12, which is reportedly an all-weather aircraft, will also have to be watched closely. In the northern borders, helicopter gunships would be of great help to the Chinese. Moreover, air-to-air, surface-to-air, and surface-to-surface missiles could also be used by Peking to great advantage in a border conflict. Equally significant is the probability of Peking acquiring and manufacturing anti-radar missiles which could be capable of attacking the Indian radar network in the northern frontier. These would mean that India should think of acquiring a counter weapons system. But as P. S. Chari, director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, said: "China's modernisation drive is not getting off the ground. They don't have suffi-

cient money and besides there is no ideological consensus on this. And in any case, if China attacks the Indian mountain divisions are better off."

But China has improved its logistic capabilities in Tibet. A pipeline now supplies oil to Lhasa and added to this are a number of airfields, which can deploy aircraft all the year round. The Sining-Golmo-Lhasa railway has already altered the supply equation in Tibet. New railway lines are under construction, including some in Sinkiang, which would bring Ladakh within 100 air miles of the railroad. Apart from this the Chinese are also improving the Karakoram highway, which will step up their supplies to Pakistan at times of need. To counter this, India would perhaps need some more divisions.

Bangladesh, too, cannot be ignored while assessing India's defence strategy. Over the past three years the Bangladesh Army's strength has moved up from a couple of brigades in 1972 to about five divisions, including an armoured brigade. This, in view of the disturbances in the north-eastern states of India, assumes significance. While the insurgency in Nagaland and Mizoram is not as acute as it was before, the turmoil in Assam has gained ascendancy. And in this region, anti-nationals are taking over. Freely circulated literature from the north-eastern states call for "the federation of states in the region, completely independent of India." This problem, with the active assistance of foreign countries around the region, especially China, may soon become a problem for India's defence also.

Since the basic strategic divide in this sub-continent is between India and Pakistan and in South Asia between India and China, an important part of India's defence preparedness is her friendship with the Soviet Union. The Soviet connection made a difference in international diplomacy since the Russian intervention in Afghanistan. Even Henry Kissinger, a strong advocate of rearming Pakistan, admitted in January this year that, "a real threat will develop if the Soviet Union and India co-operate. We must, of course, prevent this from occurring." America realised that a combination of Soviet and Indian power would be far superior to anything that the USA could assemble in this distant region to defend US and western interests.

Apparently anticipating such a contingent security problem of a US-China-Pakistan axis taking shape in South Asia and threatening India's position as a leading regional power, Mrs Gandhi has asked Moscow for \$2.6-billion worth of military hardware. And according to western sources the Soviets have agreed. There is no deal yet, and there may be none if Pakistan is not substantially re-armed. But the point is that much of the strength that Indian diplomacy has been able to show has been derived as much from India's own military capability as from its

strategic ties with the Soviet Union. Under article nine of the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty, the Soviet Union is obliged not to assist a third party with whom India is locked in conflict. Similarly, the treaty bars Indian military cooperation with a third party with whom the USSR is locked in armed conflict. Besides, in case either side is attacked or threatened with attack, "the two countries would immediately enter into mutual consultation in order to eliminate this threat and take appropriate effective measures to ensure the peace and security to their countries."

An urgent need to build up India's forces was first felt after the 1962 war with China which resulted in a new awareness of the threat along the northern borders of the country. India, initially, looked to the west for military equipment. Y. B. Chavan led a purchase mission seeking naval vessels and jet aircraft. But the USA gave a negative reply and Britain was equally unsympathetic. It was in these circumstances that India turned to the Soviet Union for military hardware. As a result, from 1964 until recently, India's main external source for weapons has been the Soviet Union. And this has covered equipment for all services — tanks, naval vessels and combat aircraft. Dependence on the Soviet Union thus extends to spares and ancillaries also. Recently, India has had deals for the supply of weapons with other countries. For example, India has decided to obtain Harrier aircraft from the UK and a recent agreement with Britain provides for the outright purchase of 40 Jaguar aircraft. Recent acquisition of equipment from the Soviet Union has been mostly for the Navy and the Air Force. Nanchuka class missile corvettes and Kashin class missile destroyers are on order from the Soviet Union. It has also been reported that India is evaluating offers for getting submarines from western nations.

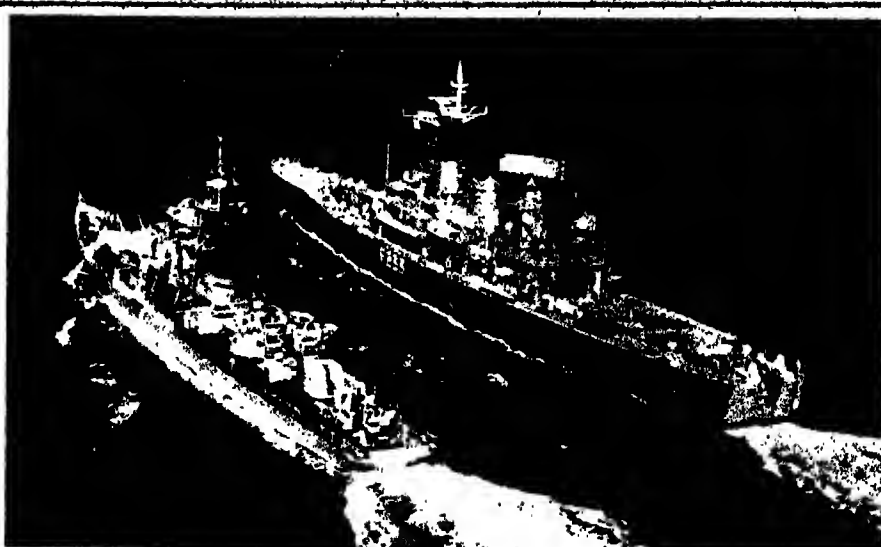
But dependence on external sources for equipment could also mean that the supplying nation could exercise political leverage within the country. It was precisely for this reason that in the defence policy framework after the 1962 war it was made clear that reliance on external supplies was to be minimised as much as possible and restricted to advanced types of weaponry only. As a matter of fact now there are 32 ordnance factories and defence public sector undertakings producing a large variety of items for the defence and military sectors. Besides, there are 32 defence research establishments in the country which support the defence production effort. The highest in value is made by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bharat Electronics Limited and three shipyards. HAL is manufacturing the MIG and Ajeet aircraft, the Avro (HS-748-M) transport aircraft and the Alouette (Chetak) and the SA-315 (Cheetah) helicopters for the Air Force. BEL is producing sophisticated electronic communi-

cation equipment and radar for the three defence services. And while the Mazagon Dock is building Leander class frigates for the Navy, Garden Reach Workshops is producing seaward defence boats, survey vessels and ocean going tugs. The value of production in ordnance factories has risen from Rs. 178 crores to Rs. 414 crores and in the defence public sector undertakings from Rs. 714 crores to Rs. 1454 crores between the years 1971-72 and 1978-79.

UNFORTUNATELY, most of the defence equipment produced in this country at present is under manufacturing licence from foreign countries granted that we have on our own designed a number of electronic communication systems, a field gun, a self-propelled gun, a frigate and a number of smaller vessels.

But building up competence in R and D is of utmost importance and our investment here has been very modest. A weapons' system of today needs fairly large numbers of electronic sub-systems and very high quality sophisticated alloys. Much of this is not made in this country because the quantities required are not economical for production here. Again, what is needed is a sophisticated electronic component industry. But our industrial sector is only equal to that of an advanced industrial nation with a market for 50-60 million people. Barring France, no industrial economy of that size is able to afford a self-reliant defence production base. In effect it means that a self-reliant defence production base can be achieved only in the context of an overall industrialisation of the country and a large scale industrial market within it. "Sophisticated defence production cannot function successfully as an island in a limited industrial economy restricted to a market of 50 to 60 million people and that too largely based on licenced production. A country that relies largely on licences for its civil industrial product, which does not achieve optimum indigenisation in respect of its civil industrial products and does not invest heavily in R and D is not going to find it easy to achieve self reliant defence production in a short period", says T. Subramaniam. This has been largely due to the compartmentalised approach to defence and development. And for the defence industry to grow it is essential that industrialisation, as a whole, takes place in the country. Said P. R. Chari, "as far as the super powers are concerned, 15 per cent of their military budget goes into R and D. In India of course this is not possible. But there should be more emphasis on this aspect. If you are talking of military preparedness of a country, then R and D is a very vital factor."

A question which is being raised



in view of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the US response to it is whether the relaxed mood in Delhi is justified. Even before the Afghan crisis, but in the context of the collapse of the Shah of Iran, Mr C. Subramaniam, during his brief tenure as Defence Minister in the Charan Singh Cabinet, had raised the question whether India should not opt for a planned upgrading of the force levels of the armed services so that it could cope with the threats building up to its security and interests. In a lecture to the officer students of the National Defence Academy in October, 1979, Mr Subramaniam drew the worst possible scenario of the region's security environment and called for India's readiness to meet the bleakest possible contingencies. He suggested that the measure of adequacy for India's defence should be China, and not Pakistan, better still, China and Pakistan combined. He perceived China embarking on a massive military modernisation programme with substantial US and western aid, a China that intended to "punish" Vietnam and was support-

ing insurgencies in Southeast Asia. He said, "China is definitely attempting to gain a foothold in the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean". He added that India could hardly rely on China's verbal assurances that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against any country. India, he said, already had an asymmetrical defence position vis-a-vis China. India's position will be worse if Pakistan too developed a nuclear capability.

To this Dr. Bhabani Sengupta, member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, said: "The main problem with the Subramaniam thesis is that it does not pause to calculate the cost of India's optimum defence preparedness. Optimum against whom? It is always possible to overreact to the strength of China and to Pakistan's ability to get help from others. But the Americans seem to be very disappointed with the big gaps in China's military and economic capability. In any case, China punished itself more than it punished Vietnam in the war of February 1979. Pakistan does not seem to be exactly itching for



another war with India. If the military junta of Pakistan knows one thing for sure, it is that in a war with India, very little will remain of Pakistan."

Dr. Sengupta said India's defence forces have developed in a rather haphazard manner in response to demands and needs of the three services and the necessity to match, and surpass, the armour of Pakistan. On the other hand, India has been able to avoid a choice between guns and butter. "What we need now is a system of integrated defence. This means far greater reliance on our own R and D, our own industrial capability and trained manpower. It is not necessary to match the air-power of Pakistan or the manpower of China. Nor it is necessary to seek weapons parity. And it is always wise to keep a low military profile. An integrated defence system, relying overwhelmingly on indigenous skills and resources, and tuned to the objective security needs of the country, taking sober account of who are, and can be, our friends and adversaries, will give us the strength we need and will not, hopefully, frighten our smaller and weaker neighbours."

Whatever apprehensions there might have been soon after the peaceful nuclear explosion (PNE) at Pokharan in 1974, it is now generally accepted that India has no nuclear arsenal. But the question which arises is: would India going the nuclear way add to her military preparedness? This, of course, would depend on a number of factors like whether Pakistan goes nuclear, whether the superpowers continue with their nuclear proliferation, whether clandestine proliferation continues to take place in countries like South Africa and Taiwan and whether nuclear weapons get increasingly legitimised or not. There is little doubt that nuclear arsenals are important for a country to increase its bargaining power vis-a-vis other countries. And, as Mr C. Subramaniam mentioned in his speech in October: "Under conditions of asymmetry (vis-a-vis nations in possession of nuclear weapons) there is no guarantee that nuclear nations will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear nations. In India we have a situation of asymmetry vis-a-vis China. No doubt China has given a pledge of no first use, but the question is how far can we rely on these pledges?" Again as P. R. Chari said: "India should be prepared for this contingency. We should not be caught with our pants down."

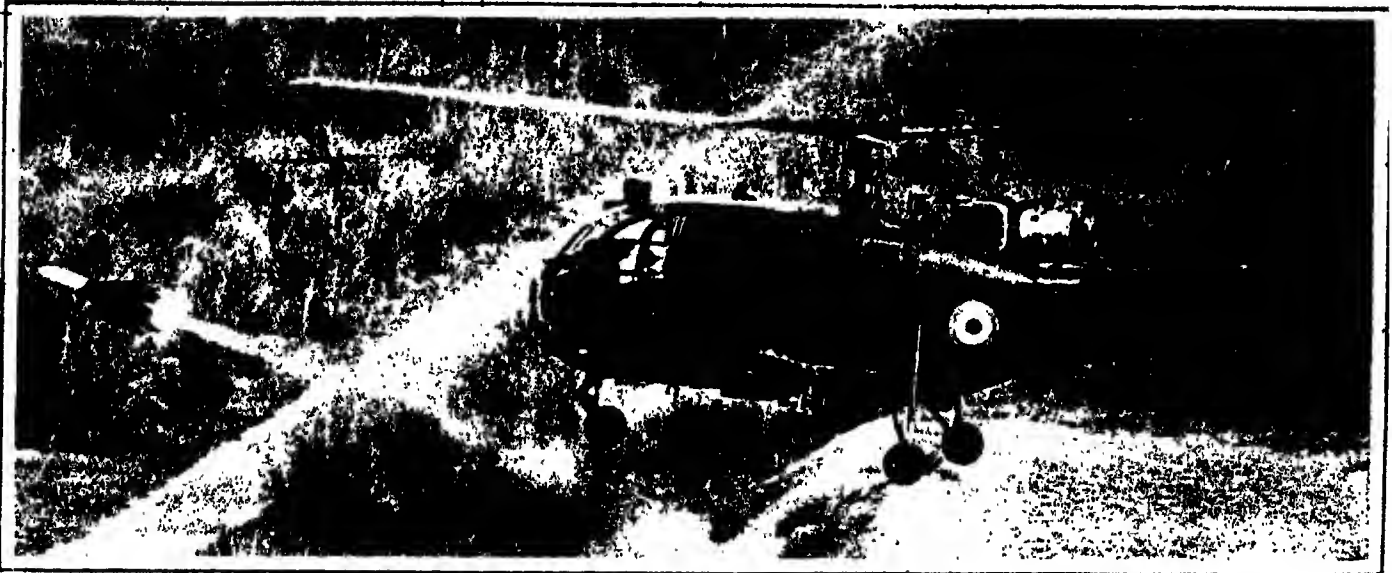
But at the moment, the mood is neither militarist nor jingoistic. And though the Prime Minister has been stressing the possible threats to India's security, she attributes this to the super power cold war in the region, rather than to regional adversaries like China and Pakistan. Sometime soon Mrs Gandhi will have a Defence Minister. The Cabinet will have its defence sub-committee and a good hard look will be taken at our defence needs during the coming years.

Raghu Rai

Is the South exposed?

By Air Commodore S. Nair (Retd.)

Raghu R.



WITH the emergence of India as the most dominant nation in the area after 1971, a new power configuration has come into being. The presence of the US fleet and air force with a base at Diego Garcia and the Russian fleet to match, have caused protest tremors across the littoral states including India. Indonesia, which is closer to the Andamans and Carnicobar group of islands, had never made secret of its hostile intentions whenever there was a conflict with Pakistan, and has now armed itself very well, in the wake of the oil boom. There are a few Arab countries, who are equipped with the most sophisticated array of arms, who were similarly disposed, whenever we had confrontations with Pakistan. The peninsular nature of our country with the far flung islands has inbuilt chasms, wherein unseen forces could lurk for advantage at the most crucial time. This threat is now more real. To top it all there is an unprecedented arms build-up in the whole region.

On the assumption of twin threats from Pakistan and China, we have four operational commands for the Army—Northern, Western, Central and Eastern. All the fighting formations including the artillery and armour are deployed in those commands. In the peninsular portion including the islands, there is only the Southern command; already an over-sized formation with a number of training, static units and a few fighting units on peace-time locations in turn. There is hardly any artillery or armour worth reckoning anywhere in the region. Except an odd unit, perhaps, the islands are also devoid of any effective punch.

So far as the Air Force is concerned the three operational Commands—Western, Central, Eastern and the group—are all poised against already acknowledged threats. In the peninsula below the 18th parallel, there are only Training and Maintenance commands, responsible for the functions their names signify. So far as is known there are no operational wings located below the Bombay sector. Thus the two main arms of the defence mechanism, Army and Air Force, are facing north-west and north-east.

Our Naval forces form the only real operational vanguard of the defence for the peninsula and the islands. The Western and Eastern commands of the Navy control their respective fleets and the Southern command has also a few ships. The Western fleet has the aircraft carrier Vikrant, a few cruisers, frigates, missile boats, reconnaissance aircraft, some helicopters and supporting vessels. The Eastern fleet is armed to a lesser degree; there are a few fighting ships, but it is doubtful whether there are any modern frigates. The Submarine force is too small and its deployment is governed mostly by tactical considerations. The fleets have a long list of tasks ranging from protection of our commerce, Bombay High oil complex, defences of ports like Calcutta, Haldia, Paradeep, Vishakapatnam, Madras, Tuticorin in the east and Cochin, Mangalore, Goa, Bombay and Kandia in the west. Though, for its size the naval forces have adequate fire power, this is in no way compatible with the onerous tasks assigned to it. Judging from any standard there is no doubt that at least double the amount of naval forces are required to assure

reasonable defence reliability. In short it is more than apparent that the under-belly of the Indian defence system is really soft and highly vulnerable.

As the peninsula and the islands are skirted by the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean, it is only logical to expect a threat from the naval forces and sea-based or land-based aircraft. The Indian Ocean has the most powerful naval forces of the USA with nuclear capability, sailing in the international waters. Only eight years ago, when India was engaged in a conflict with Pakistan, a US task force of the Seventh Fleet led by aircraft carrier Enterprise and a host of attack ships headed towards Bangladesh, to extricate the Pakistani forces. If an engagement did not take place, it was due more to the speed of the Indian offensive in that area, which culminated in the fall of Dacca, before any damage could be done. Our defence preparedness should take, due cognisance of the physical presence of the US Navy and Air Force, so close by. Indonesia, a staunch ally of Pakistan, with its revitalised armed forces, who had embarked on attacks on some of the neighbouring islands could without any qualms, take advantage of proximity and pose a direct threat to Andaman/Carnicobar island groups.

Due to the great expanse of the Indian Ocean and the superhuman efforts required to mount a major naval offensive by an enemy, the possibility of a diversionary move is more than a main attack. If a main or diversionary move to the peninsula or any one of the islands materialises, as things are at present, the entire weight would have to be borne by the naval forces. Against this the fact that the fleet is too small stands

out as a hard reality. As our Navy's power is bound to be diluted by the varied tasks entrusted to it, a determined enemy bent on diffusing the northern defences, would be able to find his way to the place he may choose.

The Army and Air Force, with their orders of battle to the north would have to make a 180 degrees turn and even if it only means partial deployment, both the services are likely to be in a spin. In a similar situation in Kutch in 1965, when Pakistan struck at a place of choice below the western defence belt, the hasty retreats we had to make, the insurmountable logistic problems that arose in rushing troops can all be recapitulated vividly. The international community awarded Pakistan The Kutch round. With the present airlift capability of the IAF, even if supported by Civil Aviation, it is doubtful where one division with supporting armour and artillery can be airlifted. Surface transportation, rail or road over long distances would provide the answer, which of course would be the main target of enemy air action, resulting in delay and consequent losses. Here it is very relevant to cite, the utterly disjointed and chaotic move of No. 1 Armoured Division, the pride of the Army, from base to concentration during the most crucial days of 1965 conflict, which was mainly the outcome of lack of forethought on the part of planners in not moving the division at least after commencement of our offensives in the Hajipur pass in August and not after our forces had crossed the border on September 6, 1965. Also in 1971, the tremendous array of problems experienced in transporting some forces from east to west after the fall of Dacca, must have been recorded in the operational lessons of both the Army and the Air Force.

The Army should raise and locate a minimum of one corps, with an adequate number of divisions, armour and artillery in the South. On account of the more integrated type of fighting involving the three services in the arena, formation of task forces of a highly mobile nature to strike with rapidity may provide one of the answers. Likewise, the Air Force should establish an operational group, in the peninsula with at least a couple of wings and some squadrons to afford ground and ocean air assaults without having to make risky movements from north during a critical phase of the operation. It may become essential either to renovate or establish new military airfields, some of which could be manned on skeleton basis, and exercised to test operational worthiness. The many oil, port and industrial complexes could be defended by surface-to-air missiles employed on a permanent basis.

The existing naval offensive capability would have to be virtually doubled to assure reasonable defence safety. The Naval expansion

should be towards acquisition of attack submarines, missile cruisers, missile boats and similar fire power packed naval weapon systems. The aircraft carrier Vikrant may have its due place in the scheme but fresh procurement of such monolithic platforms with a highly volatile cargo and a huge compliment of personnel, which always requires a large number of ships as escorts for each move, may not be a practical proposition. Unlike the super powers, who are involved in global armed strategy wherein carriers could play a pivotal role, our need is for a physical presence of a very large number of highly destructive naval task forces over a vast area. Moreover the land based aircraft could easily provide the ocean strikes if required.

The creation of an amphibious force and a huge airlift capability are two essential pre-requisites of the defence of the islands. It would only be wise not to rely too much on static type of defences on the lines of Singapore in World War II, but the islands should be so manned by a force as to absorb the initial shock, a certain amount of damage and destruction. The amphibious forces, kept in readiness could move in to support the defences of the islands so affected by enemy action at the opportune time.

In the civil defence sector, at present, there is a complete lack of awareness in the deep south. There may be a few officials already trained on the subject but the very concept is non-existent so far as the general public is concerned. Experience has shown that it takes a lot of time and effort to build up a civil defence organisation. As the cities of the south have a variety of industrial complexes the southern states should give civil defence urgent attention.

The violence, ferocity and swiftness with which the next round is likely to be fought, need not have to be reiterated. There may never be a repetition of the frontal blows but mostly a passing of strongholds through indirect approaches. Even the vacuum of the arid desert may become the most likely main scene of deep thrusts into each other's heartland or the vulnerable passes in the Himalayan sector may become jumping boards. In the midst of such a conflagration, a purposeful enemy or his allies may find it most ideal and convenient to intervene in a limited manner which would cause sufficient confusion and partial paralysis of our defences. Any hotch-potch device to induct forces so deep below the 18th parallel, can only spread apoplexy in the defence spectrum. Therefore there is a great need to restructure the defence set up of the southern region and islands with the permanent presence of operational formations of the Army and the Air Force and a vastly enhanced naval offensive power with clear-cut operational plans. Only then can the soft under-belly be considered as reasonably safe. ■

Mrs Gandh



By KEWAL VARMA

EVIDENCE is gathering that Mrs Indira Gandhi's Government is lurching towards the right. She, indeed, has never been even a mild socialist by conviction. When she first became Prime Minister in 1966, she gave a sharp right turn to policies with the aid of Ashoka Mehta and C. Subramaniam. She was so under the spell of the World Bank that she devalued the rupee at its behest. But she was rebuffed in the 1967 elections. This was followed by a serious challenge to her leadership from within her Party from the Syndicate. By that time P. N. Haksar had taken command of her think-tank. She was made to understand that, if not by conviction, she should become a socialist by convenience. The 1969-71 story is well-known. She gave radical slogans, took some radical steps and encouraged the radicals within her Party. She also entered into an alliance with the CPI. This really created a socialist euphoria. Many were misled. But even in her heyday of socialism, a Delhi-based perceptive foreign correspondent in a private communication to his editor, summed up Mrs Gandhi's ideology thus: "Slightly left-of-centre in her self-interest".

The radical hangover persisted for some time after the 1971 elections. But she felt most uncomfortable, particularly because of the prominence which radicals acquired in her Party. The Socialist Forum became a strong lobby within the Congress. She prepared a plan to immobilise it. First, she encouraged and created a rift between Congressmen with socialist and communist backgrounds, giving encouragement to the latter. An idea of how she used to operate in those days could be had from one incident. She got K. R. Ganesh included in the Congress Working Committee after the split. Then she told Chandra Shekhar: "What sort of person's Subramaniam? He has packed the Working Committee with ex-communists". The dissension weakened the Socialist

takes a right turn

Forum, bad blood was created between ex-socialists and ex-communists in the Congress. Then she asked Uma Shankar Dixit and Yashpal Kapoor to launch a Nehru Forum as a counter to the Socialist Forum. An unseemly controversy was encouraged. At that time Mrs Gandhi came down with a heavy hand and by a resolution of the parliamentary board got the Socialist Forum dissolved. This freed her from any radical pressure from

When Mrs Gandhi faced difficulties, she remembered her socialism and radical followers again. The outcome was the 20-point programme. But soon Sanjay Gandhi's five-point programme relegated the 20-point programme to the background. On the third day of the Emergency she went on the air to assure industry that there would be no more nationalisation. Radicals also became unwanted. It is a fact that for none of the radical policies, initiated between 1969 and 1977, had the initiative come from her. She agreed to nationalisation when she was asked to understand that there was a link between bank nationalisation and her political survival. She agreed to the abolition of privy purses as a part of election gimmicks. After the 1971 elections, she agreed to radical policies most reluctantly. She agreed to a constitutional amendment taking the amount of compensation outside judicial review most grudgingly. She admonished Mohan Kumaramangalam for his speech in Parliament on the subject. Kumaramangalam, in fact, died a demoralised person. Earlier when he brought forward the proposal to nationalise the coal industry, she egged on D. P. Dhar to oppose it in the Cabinet. Later, when Dhar wanted to push through the nationalisation of the wholesale trade in wheat, she encouraged Kumaramangalam and Haksar to oppose it. The collapse of wheat take-over marks the closure of the radical chapter in Mrs Gandhi's Government.

Unlike 1971, when she won on the "garibi hatao" mandate, she does not carry any radical "dead-weight" in 1980. She raised no such slogan. She won on the slogan "Indira lao, desh bachao". It is being impressed on her that the 1980 mandate has demonstrated that elections can be won without radicalism. Second, the radical pressure from within the Party has considerably weakened. Most of the radicals went over to

the Congress (U). Some who are still left in the Congress (I) like Bahuguna and K. R. Ganesh, are treated as untouchables. Some like V. P. Sathe have been more interested in colour TV than in more mundane matters. There are no Mohan Kumaramangalams, no D. P. Dhars, and no Chandrajit Yadavs in the Cabinet. Third, the CPI is also no more an ally and as such no radicalism is transmitted through it. Fourth, and this is most important, Sanjay's influence has tremendously increased over the policy-making apparatus in the Government and the Party. He is unofficially monitoring the Government's policies. Sanjay makes no secret of his distaste of radicalism. He is against nationalisation of the public sector, against Communists, current or former. Within a few days of the imposition of the Emergency, Sanjay gave an interview to Uma Vasudeva of *The Two Faces of Indira Gandhi* fame and attacked communists, the public sector and nationalisation of coal.

Let's gather together all the straws in the wind which indicate some direction. The Home Ministry has asked the intelligence agencies to start keeping a close watch on pro-Russian elements in the country. It has circulated a list of these elements. The list includes a large number of those who were once used by Mrs Gandhi as her "unofficial ambassadors" to Communist countries. Such a close watch ceased to exist 15 years back. Even the Janata Government did not start it. It is significant that the Home Ministry has not yet started keeping close intelligence watch over the RSS, a practice which was stopped by the Janata. This is, perhaps, Sanjay's response to Balasaheb Deoras' offer of cooperation to Mrs Gandhi. In foreign affairs, it is for the first time that the Soviet Foreign Minister came and went back without signing a joint communique.

The clearest indications of a shift are in the field of economic policies. A. B. A. Ghani Khan Chaudhury is the most bold in giving these indications, of course in his private durbars. He has threatened the DVC authorities that if power generation did not improve, he would hand over the management to the private sector. One often hears in the corridors of power the suggestion to denationalise coal mines. J. B. Patnaik said in Parliament that he would consider the suggestion of allowing

the private sector into the airline business to foster "healthy competition" with the public sector. When a junior Minister, Makwana, talked of nationalisation of the sugar industry, he was pulled up. Nationalisation is taboo with this Government. The hands of those who talk of denationalisation are strengthened by the fact that the performance of the public sector has slumped. In a similar situation in 1971-72 there were then committed Ministers like Mohan Kumaramangalam, C. Subramaniam and D. P. Dhar who saw in the public sector an instrument of social change. They showed perseverance and doggedness to improve the public sector. But the present Ministers are looking for some good excuse to hand over the public sector to the private sector.

Another area where pressure is being mounted to dilute existing policies is in regard to multinationals and monopoly houses. Vice President Hidayatullah is virtually campaigning publicly to allow multinational companies to enter India "lock, stock and barrel". Such a blatant advocacy of multinationals by a person occupying a high public office has never been done in the past. Surely, he cannot be speaking of his own accord. The Government has so far not contradicted Hidayatullah. It is also a fact that a former Coca Cola king, Charanjit Singh, a Congress (I) MP from Delhi, is among the loyal followers of Sanjay. Those who used to make easy money from Coca Cola have not reconciled to the exit of Coca Cola ordered by George Fernandes. Similarly, there is talk to remove all restrictions on the expansion of large houses in the name of increasing production. Even the will of those who have been opposing the growth of monopolies is weakening as a result of the continuing poor performance of the public sector. The forcefulness with which Vasant Sathe is advocating the introduction of colour TV sounds like the funeral oration of the "Garibi hatao" phase. We should now be prepared for a new era of laissez faire where profit and riches will be given social respectability and production will increase to meet the increasing demand of the elite. It is well known that industrialists supported Mrs Gandhi to the hilt in the elections in the name of getting a Stable Government. This time their investment may not go to waste.



A meeting before the transfer of power. (Clockwise around the table, from left) Baldev Singh, J. B. Kripalani, Vallabhbhai Patel, Nehru, Lord Mountbatten, Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan. Extreme right, Lord Ismay



Pakistan: Paradise lost

RAJENDRA SAREEN covers in his sweep 40 years of the subcontinent's history to demonstrate how the Muslim problem was not solved and how Indian Muslims are now fighting for a place in the sun here.

Lahore Resolution

Resolved that it is the considered view of this Session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz. that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute Independent States in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in these units and in the regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them and in other parts of India where the Muslims are in minority, adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

This Session further authorises the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communication customs and such other matters as may be necessary—March 23, 1940.

FORTY years ago on March 23 the All India Muslim League session at Lahore adopted a resolution which at that time was described as the charter of the political aspirations of the Indian Muslims. Later it was hailed as the proclamation of Pakistan. Today it enjoys the status of a sacrament and constitutes the ideological sheet-anchor of the state of Pakistan. However, the word Pakistan does not occur in the text at all.

Pakistan was brought into being ostensibly as a solution of the Muslim problem in India. It was conceived as the homeland of the subcontinent's Muslims. It was the fruition of the two-nation theory debating the Hindus and Muslims as two separate nations straddling the length and breadth of India. The logic of this was highly dubious even at that point of time. Since

then, however, the absurdities of the two-nation theory have become ever so patently manifest.

The strength of the Pakistan movement stemmed from the failure of the Congress leadership to understand and appreciate that the primary motivation of the Muslim upsurge was not separatist but a search for economic emancipation on par with the more advanced sections of Indian society. Had the situation been tackled at that level and appropriate correctives devised, the story would have taken a different turn. The Muslim strivings were basically modern and a clear repudiation of orthodoxy. Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's intransigence found sustenance from the Congress proclivity to seek cosmetic remedies by drafting in the mullahs as a counterpoise to what it considered as the bogus Muslim League claim to speak on behalf of the Muslims. Since religious ortho-

doxy was not the real motivation, the Ulama became the object of Muslim ridicule and the Congress lost its credibility. All its arguments fell on deaf ears. The Muslim mind was not receptive to anything coming from the Congress. In retrospect it can be seen that Maulana Azad had the vision and the foresight to see the problem in all its dimensions but such was the blind fury driving the Muslim community that he was denounced as a show-boy, insulted and humiliated.

Thirty-three years after Pakistan became a reality, it is none of the things it was supposed to be. Through the partition of India in 1947, the Muslim community split itself in a manner that brought about a marked diminution in its collective strength, prestige and influence that it had come to possess as part of a historical process. The fallout from the im-

pulse generated at the time of the partition was that ethnic, cultural and linguistic facets of the human existence came to be considered antagonistic to and incompatible with Islamic identity. This attitude culminated in the split of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh. Far from a solution of his problem, it has been instrumental in a sharp deterioration in the position and status of the Indian Muslim. As for being a Muslim homeland in the subcontinent, one need not go beyond recalling the inability of Pakistan to accept the people still in Bangladesh who claim to be its citizens. Equally irrelevant is the claptrap about Pakistan being the citadel of Islam. Islam has been there for 400 years while Pakistan is no more than 33 years old. The industrial and economic infrastructure of Pakistan is barely adequate to sustain it as a national entity. The oil-rich countries have not shut themselves away from the non-Muslim world and there is no indication that they propose to tie themselves up with Pakistan to the exclusion of everybody else. Pakistan can play the pan-Islamic angle only to the extent it serves the geo-political objectives of the oil-rich nations. So far none of them have ever agreed to invest Pakistan with a veto on their relations with India.

Then, does it mean that Pakistan stands doomed, having lost its raison d'être? The answer is an emphatic no. Its ideological origin is no longer relevant. Regardless of that, Pakistan is a political reality. It is a nation state enjoying the consent and acceptance of its people and constituent territories. If Pakistan lets go the temptation of playing games that are inconsistent with its geo-political and economic imperatives it is perfectly viable and feasible. Those who talk of disintegration of Pakistan as a result of regional controversies display their ignorance. No, there is no secessionist situation in Pakistan.

Soon after the Lahore resolution, Mr K. M. Munshi came out with an equally illogical, much more irrelevant, but emotionally evocative concept of Akhand Bharat. Earlier, Veer Savarkar had spoken of the inviolability of the 'Hindu Bhoomi' from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari and Indus to Brahmaputra. Right from the word go, Akhand Bharat has been music to the Hindu chauvinist's ear. It makes every Hindu chauvinist chest expand an inch or two. Correspondingly, Akhand Bharat has been the proverbial red rag to the Muslim bull. It turns the taste in a Muslim mouth bitter. This single word has been the source of such colossal emotional upheaval! It has over the period attained a connotation which evokes extreme abhorrence, apprehension and anxiety in Pakistan and undisguised disgust among the Indian Muslims.

And yet it is essentially a non-issue, a bogey. Its emotional and

psychological reverberations notwithstanding, as a political factor it is pure fiction, shorn of reality. In any event it is altogether irrelevant to any of the policy objectives which India as a nation has been pursuing since Independence.

The Indian subcontinent's unity as a political concept has in fact an entirely non-Hindu origin. The cultural unity of the subcontinent and the religious bonds welding the Hindu society have been a reality for quite a few thousand years going back into the pre-historic times but Hinduism as a political factor has never been instrumental in promoting

the consolidation of the various centres of state power and binding them together as a step towards expanding the frontiers of a unified Hindu state.

Even before the advent of Islam in the Bharatvarsha, this huge land mass had never known a unified central political authority extending from north to south and east to west. There is thus no evidence of a unified political structure transcending the length and breadth of the subcontinent. There have at best been periods of regional consolidation, seldom lasting more than a generation or two.

What Jinnah said

Excerpts from Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's speech before the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan.

"I KNOW there are people who do not quite agree with the division of India and the partition of the Punjab and Bengal...Any idea of united India could never have worked and in my judgement it would have led us to terrific disaster. Maybe that view is correct; maybe it is not; that remains to be seen. All the same, in this division it was impossible to avoid the question of minorities being in one Dominion or the other. Now that was unavoidable. There is no other solution. Now what shall we do? Now, if we want to make this great state of Pakistan happy and prosperous we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people, and especially of the masses and the poor. If you will work in cooperation, forgetting the past, burying the hatchet, you are bound to succeed. If you change your past and work together in a spirit that every one of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed, is first, second and last citizen of this state with equal rights, privilege and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.

"I cannot emphasise it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities the Hindu community and the Muslim community — because even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis, and so on and among the Hindus you have Brahmans, Vaishnavas, Khatri, also Bengalees, Madrasis and so on — will vanish. Indeed if you ask me this has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain freedom and independence and but for this we would have been free people long ago. No power can hold an-

other nation, and specially a nation of 400 million souls in subject, nobody could have conquered you, and even if it had happened nobody could have continued to hold on you for any length of time but for this. Therefore, we must learn a lesson from this. You are free, you are free to go to your temple, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed — that has nothing to do with the business of the state. As you know history shows that in England conditions sometime ago were much worse than those prevailing in India today. The Roman Catholics and the Protestants persecuted each other. Even now there are some states in existence where there are discriminations made and bars imposed against a particular class. Thank God, we are not starting in those days. We are starting in the days when there is no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one state. The people of England in course of time had to face the realities of the situation and had to discharge the responsibilities and burdens placed upon them by the government of their country and they went through the fire step by step. Today, you might say with justice that Roman Catholics and Protestants do not exist; what exists now is that every man is a citizen, an equal citizen of Great Britain and they are all members of the nation.

"Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state." ... August 11, 1947, Karachi.

IT was that controversial Moghul monarch, Aurangzeb, who initiated the first effective moves for the political consolidation of the subcontinent. Simultaneously his excessive commitment to Muslim orthodoxy and religious intolerance generated impulses which were destructive of the thrust of his political achievement. But the fact remains that he was the pioneer of India's political unity, setting in motion a process which survived through the uncertain and unsettled times that followed his reign and was to become the principal objective of the British policy in the subcontinent.

What was started by Aurangzeb was consolidated by the British and those who talk glibly of Indian nationalism as a historical phenomenon would do well to remember that in the political sense it was the British rule and the English language which provided the flesh and bones to a concept which throughout had been no more than a religious-cultural ethos that never got translated into a political reality until Gandhiji emerged on the scene.

The vivisection of India was strongly resented and opposed by the Hindus, but, when the event did finally come about, it was the Muslims who got divided. Today the Muslims of the subcontinent stand

split into three bits between Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. They are incapable of acting in concert. The political dispensation is not conducive to that. On the contrary the distinct Hindu orientation of the Indian polity that has taken place during the last 32 years would have been inconceivable if the Muslim influence in the political, social and cultural terms had not got dissipated in the wake of the partition in 1947 and all that followed.

India has moved a long way off from the days when some of the most ticklish, sensitive and explosive issues capable of blowing up a society were obliged to take a back seat in front of the searing controversies around the Hindu-Muslim question. It has been a long haul, but India today is a better consolidated polity than it ever was before. The regional and linguistic aspirations of the people in the east and the west and the south asserted themselves and secured satisfaction of their legitimate aspirations. The Indian polity today has developed a system of adjustment which is something to be truly proud of and must be the envy of not only nations such as Pakistan but many another polyglot society.

The Muslim problem in India, alas, is still crying out for a solution. The trauma of 1947 is long past but the

Indian Muslim has yet to attain his full stature as an equal partner in the country's affairs. National commitment to secularism, duly enshrined in the Constitution, did create the framework for that attainment. Nevertheless realities on the ground leave much to be desired. The Indian Muslim has passed through three distinct phases since 1947. Immediately after the partition he faced the problem of physical survival. It took quite some time for things to settle down to an extent that survival was not in jeopardy. But, there were clear symptoms of withdrawal. A sort of guilt complex for having divided the country gripped the Muslim mind. Economic and employment opportunities were neither sought nor offered and such were the times that no grievance was made of the denial of even the most elementary rights. A major part of the political elite moved over to Pakistan and in the process not only denuded the hapless Muslim community of leadership but also subjected it to the added burden of suspicion from the rest of the nation. On completion of educational and professional courses of training, young Muslims found it easier to get jobs in Pakistan and by and large went in for that.

By the turn of the decade in 1960 the opportunities in Pakistan had begun to dry up. The domination of the mohajirs in the administrative, political and economic fields in Pakistan during the first decade had by then begun to be subjected to serious challenge by the local elites. But even so the process did not quite come to a dead-end until a few years later.

The second phase started around 1965. Pakistan had ceased to be the land of opportunity for the Indian Muslim, but the lure survived. Many an Indian Muslim did some odd job, saved money and went over to Pakistan to try his luck. He came back disappointed but the attraction abided. This was the darkest period of the last 33 years when the Muslim mind was torn between the myth that was Pakistan and the reality of their being Indian nationals. Thus ran the process that virtually shattered whatever illusions remained among the Indian Muslims about Pakistan.

The complete breakdown of communication between the two countries after 1971, though heart-rending and emotionally cruel, was instrumental in putting the Indian Muslim back on the road to recovery. The lure of easy options disappeared and he began to look for the solution of his problems and economic opportunities within the Indian polity. Pakistan ceased to loom large on his consciousness. The next few years witnessed him seeking his rights and opportunities and getting them in an ever increasing measure. The process is by no means fully what it must ultimately be, but it is only a matter of time before the matters are set right.

What Nehru said



Excerpts from Jawaharlal Nehru's speech at the AICC meeting on June 15, 1947:-

THE most urgent task at present is to arrest the swift drift towards anarchy and chaos. Disruptive forces are at work and the most important disruptive force is that of the Muslim League. Their first task should be the establishment of a strong central government to rule the country firmly and to ensure individual's liberty of life; all other questions were of secondary importance.

A responsible body must not think in terms of today only, but

there was a tomorrow and the day after that. It would be ridiculous to suggest that the British should be everything before they quit. The June 3 statement could not have come about, had there been no agreement. It was not an imposed award. Circumstances were such that the Congress agreed to it. It was not like one of those old decisions of the British Government which they could accept or reject. The acceptance for which, I am wholly responsible does not mean that I agree to every word in that statement. But I agree with the fundamental principle therein.

It was sufficient to compare what happened in Noakhali and Calcutta and again what happened in Bihar. By supreme efforts the Congress was able to control the situation in Bihar, but they could do nothing in the Punjab. Why did such things happen in the Punjab and why was the Khizar ministry broken and how was it? No one seemed to be capable of controlling the Punjab disturbances. The answer was patent. The Congress Working Committee passed a resolution in favour of the partition of the Punjab into two administrative provinces. Partition is better than murder of innocent citizens. *Hindustan Times, June 16, 1947.*

In the fourth decade of their freedom, what are the prospects of India and Pakistan evolving a co-operative relationship

such as exists between the USA and Canada? The process of normalisation since 1972 which provides the framework of mutual relations under the Simla Agreement is all right as far as it goes. But, it is clearly not enough to subside as peaceful neighbours without any measure of warmth, if we are to meet the challenges that have recently emerged. The important thing is to dispel the fears and anxieties that inhibit the two countries from coming together to share each other's joys and sorrows.

Pakistan's understanding of Indian objectives in relation to her is largely conditioned by a belief that, having opposed the Muslim demand for the partition in 1947, the Hindus continue to nurse a grievance over the existence of Pakistan so that they would like to restore the status quo ante and in the meanwhile make things as difficult for Pakistan as possible. The Indian role in the emergence of Bangladesh continues to loom large over the Pakistani consciousness.

In this respect, fact and fiction are so inextricably mixed up that an article such as this cannot even attempt to unscramble the two. It is a pity that this aspect has not been researched to the extent it should have been because an objective analysis of the events since partition may help light up many of the dark corners of the web of make-believe that has come to determine the view of each other by India and Pakistan.

However, even a preliminary examination of the records would show that in the penultimate stages of the political talks which preceded the withdrawal of the British from India, acrimony between the Congress and the Muslim League had assumed such a dimension that the former had decidedly veered round to the view that partition, indeed, was the only viable solution. What is more, the sections of the Congress leadership who articulated the Hindu view of things were more forthright in demanding partition. Maulana Azad remained the lone opponent of partition as a political solution. Mahatma Gandhi, too, had acquiesced. Mr G. D. Birla, who exercised no mean influence in the counsels of national leadership recalls with obvious satisfaction that he "not only believed in the inevitability of partition but always considered this as a good way out of our difficulties" (*In the shadow of the Mahatma*—p. 316).

Mr Allen Campbell Johnson records in his book *Mission With Mountbatten* at page 98 that "Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel accept partition on the understanding that by conceding Pakistan to Jinnah they will hear no more of him and eliminate his nuisance value, or, as Nehru put it privately, that by 'cut-



Jinnah's mausoleum

ting off the head we will get rid of the headache'...Gandhi refuses to align himself with this concept, and is putting up a fierce rear-guard action against it. How far he will carry this opposition is one of the big imponderables."

Maulana Azad records that Sardar Patel was the first man to agree to partition. According to the Maulana, he "found Sardar Patel so much in favour of partition that he was hardly prepared even to listen to any other point of view...I was surprised and pained when Patel said that whether we liked it or not, there were two nations in India. He was now convinced that Muslims and Hindus could not be united into one nation. There was no alternative except to recognize this. In this way alone could we end the quarrel between Hindus and Muslims..."

Sentries outside the Presidential palace



Jawaharlal spoke to me in sorrow but left no doubt in my mind as to how his mind was working..... (He) asked me to give up my opposition to partition. He said it was inevitable and it would be wisdom not to oppose what was bound to happen... I saw clearly that we were taking one wrong decision after another. Instead of retracing our steps we were now going deeper into the morass..." (*India Wins Freedom* pp 184 to 186).

When Maulana Azad took up the matter with Mahatma Gandhi on March 31, 1947 the Mahatma said, "if the Congress wishes to accept partition, it will be over my dead body". Later that day Gandhiji met Lord Mountbatten after which Sardar Patel spent two hours with him. Subsequently, Mahatma had two further meetings with Lord Mountbatten on April 1 and 2. When Maulana Azad met the Mahatma again he found the latter too had changed. The Mahatma "was still not openly in favour of partition but he no longer spoke so vehemently against it...In despondency I said at last, 'if even you have now adopted these views, I see no hope of saving India from catastrophe'. Gandhiji did not reply to my comments." (*India Wins Freedom* p 187).

At this stage Gandhiji put forward the suggestion that the Congress should let Mr Jinnah form the Government and choose the members of the Cabinet. Lord Mountbatten is quoted by Maulana Azad to have expressed the view that if the Congress accepted Gandhiji's suggestion, partition could still be avoided because such an offer would convince the Muslim League and perhaps win the confidence of Mr Jinnah. This move, however, could make no progress as both Pandit Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel opposed it vehemently and forced Gandhiji to withdraw the suggestion.

AND that brings us to the question whether the thrust of Indian policy in respect of Pakistan has been towards the latter's destruction. War, it is said, is an instrument of policy. Policy, in turn, is determined by the objectives pursued by a country.

The concept of Akhand Bharat, which according to most Pakistanis determines Indian policy towards their country, is altogether illusory. In terms of contemporary political realities it is positively detrimental to the Hindu economic and political interests. There is no Hindu political factor worth the name in Pakistan. There is a barely 10 per cent non-Muslim population in Bangladesh but it counts for very little in terms of effective political strength. The Muslim factor in India, on the other hand, has the capacity to determine the course of events in the country and to that extent is a material factor to be reckoned with. No political Party seriously contending for power in India can be unmindful of the Muslim factor. From this point of view Akhand Bharat cannot but undermine the Hindu position by consolidating the Muslim factor at present conveniently dispersed among three nation states. No, unification of the subcontinent through military conquest or otherwise is not worth the candle so far as the Hindus are concerned.

Dr Henry Kissinger only shows his ignorance of the objective realities of the subcontinent's politics when he talks of the possibility of an Indian attack on West Pakistan after the fall of Dacca. It appears the myth of Hindu frustration over creation of Pakistan has distorted the understanding and perception of quite a few even among those who ought to know better.

In this regard it is well to recall that having successfully destroyed the Pakistani military strength in East Pakistan, Mrs Indira Gandhi lost no time in pulling back the Indian troops from Bangladesh. If Akhand Bharat had, indeed, been an Indian objective the military occupation of East Bengal was half the job done. Bonafide long-term national objectives are not surrendered after military victory for cosmetic reasons.

Then, why did India participate in the break-up of Pakistan? The answer lies in the policy of hostility pursued by Pakistan which had actively connived at, promoted and sustained secessionist insurgency in the eastern areas of India. East Bengal had become the sanctuary and jumping board for the insurgents of various hues. Even so, India could not do a thing until the Pakistani ruling military junta itself created a situation in which the continuance of East Bengal as a constituent province of Pakistan had anyhow become impossible. The option before India was to act or look on as a passive spectator while the consequences of the wanton brutalities

unleashed by the Pakistani rulers were overflowing into our territory. Failure to act then would have increased Pakistani belligerence towards India to unmanageable proportions.

It is not my case that India has been oozing with goodwill towards Pakistan, while all the wrong things have been done by the latter. The decision to hold back Rs 55 crores, which constituted Pakistan's share of the Reserve Bank balances, was devoid of legal and moral justification. So was the refusal to deliver Pakistan's share of ordnance supplies. There have been numerous other instances when India has acted petulantly rather than generously. But, no single action by itself or all combined together have been calculated to obliterate Pakistan as a nation state. Even the wars between the two countries have not been fought on the basis of non-acceptance of Pakistan by India.

Be that as it may, the long story of unsatisfactory relations between Pakistan and India needs to take a turn for the better. Hostility with India has hurt Pakistan far beyond the lost wars. Nor for that matter has India escaped the evil consequences of the unhappy situation. The failure of Pakistan to evolve a viable political culture or build a sound economic base can be directly traced to the distortions arising out of the obsessive fear of and preoccupation with India.

The new situation that has developed in the neighbourhood of the subcontinent has imparted a new dimension and urgency to the task of improving relations between the two countries. There is no basis for the assumption that co-operation and good relations must inevitably be in derogation of the national sovereignty of one or the other. On the other hand improved relations cannot but contribute to their collective security.

The clouds of fear and suspicion that have so far plagued Indo-Pak relations are traceable to the myths surrounding their emergence as free nations. Since then the two countries have drifted apart to an extent that even people, whose business it is to know, are ignorant of, rather than well-informed about, the realities in the other country. The situation in respect of Bangladesh, too, is not exactly what it should be. The result is that public opinion is a negative factor in improvement of relations.

There is thus need for a more concerted effort to promote a systematic study of the entire gamut of factors affecting the relations between the countries of the subcontinent. I would strongly urge institutions like the Gandhi Peace Foundation and the Aligarh Muslim University in India, the Quaid-e-Azam Academy and the Quaid-e-Azam Foundation in Pakistan and some such body as the Carnegie Endowment For International Peace to act in this direction.

I HAVE considered from every possible point of view the scheme of Pakistan as formulated by the Muslim League. As an Indian, I have examined its implications for the future of India as a whole. As a Muslim, I have examined its likely effects upon the fortunes of Muslims of India.

Considering the scheme in all its aspects I have come to the conclusion that it is harmful not only for India as a whole but for Muslims in particular. And, in fact, it creates more problems than it solves.

I must confess that the very term Pakistan goes against my grain. It suggests that some portions of the world are pure while others are impure. Such a division of territories into pure and impure is un-Islamic and a repudiation of the very spirit of Islam. Islam recognises no such division and the Prophet says, 'God has made the whole world a mosque for me.'

Further, it seems that the scheme of Pakistan is a symbol of defeatism and has been built up on the analogy of the Jewish demand for a national home. It is a confession that Indian Muslims cannot hold their own in India as a whole and would be content to withdraw to a corner specially reserved for them.

One can sympathise with the aspirations of the Jews for such a national home, as they are scattered all over the world and cannot in any region have any effective voice in the administration. The condition of Indian Muslims is quite otherwise. Over 90 million in number they are in quantity and quality sufficiently important element in Indian life to influence decisively all questions of administration and policy. Nature has further helped them by concentrating them in certain areas.

In such context, the demand for Pakistan loses all force. As a Muslim, I for one am not prepared for a moment to give up my right to treat the whole of India as my domain and to share in the shaping of its political and economic life. To me it seems a sure sign of cowardice to give up what is my patrimony and content myself with a mere fragment of it.

As is well-known Mr Jinnah's Pakistan scheme is based on his two-nation theory. His thesis is that India contains many nationalities based on religious differences. Of them the two major nations, the Hindus and Muslims, must as separate nations have separate states. When Dr. Edward Thompson once pointed out to Mr. Jinnah that Hindus and Muslims live side by side in thousands of Indian towns, villages and hamlets, Mr. Jinnah replied that this

What Maulana Azad said

in no way affected their separate nationality. Two nations according to Mr Jinnah, confront one another in every hamlet, village and town, and he, therefore, desires that they should be separated into two states.

I am prepared to overlook all other aspects of the problem and judge it from the point of view of Muslim interests alone. I shall go still further and say that if it can be shown that the scheme of Pakistan can in any way benefit Muslims I would be prepared to accept it myself and also to work for its acceptance by others. But the truth is that even if I examine the scheme from the point of view of the communal interests of the Muslims themselves, I am forced to the conclusion that it can in no way benefit them or allay their legitimate fears.

Let us consider dispassionately the consequences which will follow if we give effect to the Pakistan scheme. India will be divided into two states, one with a majority of Muslims and the other of Hindus. In the Hindustan State there will remain 3½ crores of Muslims scattered in small minorities all over the land. With 17 per cent in U.P., 12 per cent in Bihar and 9 per cent in Madras, they will be weaker than they are today in the Hindu majority provinces. They have had their homelands in these regions for almost a thousand years and built up well-known centres of Muslim culture and civilisation there.

They will awaken overnight and discover that they have become aliens and foreigners. Backward industrially, educationally and economically, they will be left to the mercies to what would then become an unadulterated Hindu raj.

On the other hand, their position within the Pakistan State will be vulnerable and weak. Nowhere in Pakistan will their majority be comparable to the Hindu majority in the Hindustan State.

In fact, their majority will be so slight that it will be offset by the economical, educational and political lead enjoyed by non-Muslims in these areas. Even if this were not so and Pakistan were overwhelmingly Muslim in population, it still could hardly solve the problem of Muslims in Hindustan.

Two States confronting one another offer no solution of the problem of one another's minorities, but only lead to retribution and reprisals by introducing a system of mutual hostages. The scheme of Pakistan therefore solves no problem for the Muslims. It cannot safeguard their rights where they are in a minority nor as citi-

zens of Pakistan secure them a position in Indian or world affairs which they would enjoy as citizens of a major state like the Indian Union.

It may be argued that if Pakistan is so much against the interest of the Muslims themselves, why should such a large section of Muslims be swept away by its lure? The answer is to be found in the attitude of certain communal extremists among the Hindus. When the Muslim League began to speak of Pakistan, they read into the scheme a sinister Pan-Islamic conspiracy and began to oppose it out of fear that it foreshadowed a combination of Indian Muslims with trans-Indian Muslim States.

The opposition acted as an incentive to the adherents of the League. With simple though untenable logic they argued that if



Hindus were so opposed to Pakistan, surely it must be of benefit to Muslims. An atmosphere of emotional frenzy was created which made reasonable appraisal impossible and swept away especially the younger and more impressionable among the Muslims. I have, however, no doubt that when the present frenzy has died down and the question can be considered dispassionately, those who now support Pakistan will themselves repudiate it as harmful for Muslim interests.

The formula which I have succeeded in making the Congress accept secures whatever merit the Pakistan scheme contains while all its defects and drawbacks are avoided. The basis of Pakistan is the fear of interference by the Centre in Muslim majority areas

as the Hindus will be in a majority in the Centre. The Congress meets this fear by granting full autonomy to the provincial units and vesting all residuary power in the provinces. It has also provided for two lists of Central subjects, one compulsory and one optional, so that if any provincial unit so wants, it can administer all subjects itself except a minimum delegated to the Centre. The Congress scheme therefore ensures that Muslim majority provinces are internally free to develop as they will, but can at the same time influence the Centre on all issues which affect India as a whole.

The situation in India is such that all attempts to establish a centralised and unitary government are bound to fail. Equally doomed to failure is the attempt to divide India into two States. After considering all aspects of the question, I have come to the conclusion that the only solution can be on the lines embodied in the Congress formula which allows room for development both to the provinces and to India as a whole. The Congress formula meets the fear of the Muslim majority areas to allay which the scheme of Pakistan was formed. On the other hand, it avoids the defects of the Pakistan scheme which would bring the Muslims where they are in a minority under a purely Hindu government.

I am one of those who consider the present chapter of communal bitterness and differences as a transient phase in Indian life. I firmly hold that they will disappear when India assumes the responsibility of her own destiny. I am reminded of a saying of Gladstone that the best cure for a man's fear of the water is to throw him into it. Similarly India must assume responsibility and administer her own affairs before fears and suspicions can be fully allayed.

When India attains her destiny, she will forget the present chapter of communal suspicion and conflict and face the problems of modern life from a modern point of view. Differences will no doubt persist, but they will be economic, not communal. Opposition among political Parties will continue, but they will be based, not on religion but on economic and political issues. Class and not community will be the basis of future alignments and policies will be shaped accordingly. If it be argued that this is only a faith which events may not justify I would say that in any case the nine crores of Muslims constitute a factor which nobody can ignore and whatever the circumstances, they are strong enough to safeguard their own destiny.—April 15, 1946.

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"People like me are wild. Just wild about your 'V.I.P.'," said Alake Uwaleke*, in fluent, cultured English. She sat there, looking tall, dark and stunning.

We had no difficulty in returning a compliment.

"Black" we said, "is beautiful."

"I agree" she said serenely, "but I also like brown. I just love your 'V.I.P.' colours. All twelve of them. You have everything except white. Now, that's unusual!"

We promptly assured her that there was nothing either racial or discriminatory about this. Why, our business associates would vouch for the fact that we like everything in black and white!

We congratulated her on her English. "In India" we complained, "we have 14 major languages. Not including English."

"I understand" she said sympathetically, "back home in Nigeria, we have 200!"

After that, we decided not to trade problems!

"We're trading know-how" we said, "a joint 'V.I.P.' venture will be set up shortly in Nigeria."

"I'd be tempted to invest. Only my family's interest is in oil. Not travelware."

"Black gold!" we said, triumphantly.

"What do Africans like specially about our 'V.I.P.'?" we asked.

"Everything!" was the understated reply. "The style of your Classic range. The beautiful brocade lining. Especially your combination

locks. They work like magic!"

"But" she carried on "your Travelite range is great too. Of course, nobody could travel as light as my grandfather. He was the tribal Chief for 50 years. Sometimes he wore a smile. Most often he wore a scowl. And, I can assure you he didn't need any luggage to carry either around!"

Well, Africa has changed a lot lately. Thankfully!

"We believe" she said, "that 'V.I.P.' is the luggage of today. And this attitude is coloured. Coloured by the fact that in Africa we are now slaves to progress!"

"Everywhere I go, they ask about my 'V.I.P.'s. I tell them all. We Nigerians,

never lose an opportunity to drum a message home!

"I'm off now" she said, "to Timbuktoo."

Was she pulling our leg? "No, no" she said, "Timbuktoo is almost next door. You people are so much in the dark about Africa. That's probably why it was called the Dark Continent!"

We saw her into a sleek limousine. And, as she stepped in, it was evident that blood would always tell. She would undoubtedly be like her grandfather, the Chief attraction!

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'Bugging' by law?

EVERY so often and especially at times when a political crisis occurs or political infighting intensifies, one hears complaints from politicians that their telephones are being tapped. Such complaints have been heard from many in recent days as well. As it happens, Opposition leaders can freely air their resentment but those of the ruling Party must keep their suspicions to themselves for they know that the tapping is done to check on their loyalty and complaints can make matters worse.

The last time the subject was considered in Parliament in any detail was on December 20, 1977 in the Lok Sabha. Mr Vyalar Ravi had given notice of a motion of breach of privilege of Parliament by the Home Minister which the Speaker referred to the Minister for his comments. There were complaints by Opposition leaders as well as by members of the Janata Party. Mr Sumar Mukherjee (CPM) added that besides tapping their telephones, members of his Party were also being shadowed.

The then Prime Minister, Mr Morarji Desai's reply was as comprehensive as it was unsatisfactory. Telephones of anti-national or anti-social elements or those who indulged in violent activities were being tapped, he said. Mr Desai claimed that Government was entitled to do so and whatever was done was "within my knowledge." He, however, denied that any tapping was done to keep a track of political activities.

Mr Desai made an interesting disclosure. Within a week of assuming office he instructed the officers concerned to show him the list of names of persons whose telephones were being tapped. "I have seen the list", he said and claimed that it did not include MPs. No names would be added to the list without his permission, either.

Successive Governments of India have relied on an absurd provision in an archaic statute—Section 5 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885. It reads thus "(1) On the occurrence of any public emergency, or in the interest of the public safety, the Central Government, or a State Government, or any officer specially authorised in this behalf by the Central or a State Government may...

"(b) Order that any message or class of messages, to or from any persons or class of persons, or re-

Civil Liberties



By A. G. NOORANI

lating to any particular subject brought for transmission by, or transmitted or received by, any telegraph shall not be transmitted, or shall be intercepted or detained, or shall be disclosed to the Government making the order or an officer thereof mentioned in the order.

(2) If any doubt arises as to the existence of a public emergency, or whether any act done under sub-section (1) was in the interest of the public safety, a certificate of the Central or, as the case may be, the State Government, shall be conclusive proof on the point."

Section 26 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 is similar: "(1) On the occurrence of any public emergency, or in the interest of the public safety or tranquillity, the Central Government, or a State Government, or any officer specially authorised in this behalf by the Central or the State Government, may, by order in writing, direct that any postal article or class or description of postal articles in course of transmission by post shall be intercepted or detained or shall be disposed of in such manner as the authority issuing the order may direct.

"(2) If any doubt arises as to the existence of a public emergency or as to whether any act done under sub-section (1) was in the interest of the public safety or tranquillity, a certificate of the Central Government or, as the case may be, of the State Government shall be conclusive proof on the point."

Thus, both the statutes leave it to the exclusive and subjective decision of the executive. The matter is placed beyond the scrutiny of courts of law. Whether

these sections are compatible with the fundamental rights is doubtful.

There is another aspect. The scope of judicial review of administrative action has increased considerably thanks to the recent case law and it would be necessary for the Government to establish objectively that there was a real threat to "public safety" or that "public emergency" had in fact occurred to warrant the exercise of these powers. But how is a citizen to prove in a court of law that his phone is being tapped?

However, the march of science has made telephone-tapping archaic and the statutes irrelevant, in a sense. As Prof. Harry Street points out in his study *Freedom, the Individual and the Law*, a superb Pelican, "Electronic devices such as laser beams, closed-circuit television and micro-miniaturised radio transmitters have rendered wire-tapping an old-fashioned method of overhearing conversations. Little is known about the extent to which police eavesdrop by these new methods; for example, by the use of portable radio equipment which can be hidden in a briefcase or even on a person's premises. One thing is clear: such evidence will not be rendered inadmissible merely because the police have to break into private premises in order to conceal the equipment there."

The legal position in India is the same. Evidence is not inadmissible because it has been obtained improperly by bugging or wire-tapping. In the United States it would be inadmissible.

Fifty years ago the legendary Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes characterised phone-tapping as "dirty business". Since then the US Supreme Court has ruled that telephones can be tapped only if a court warrant has first been obtained. Mr Justice Powell's remarks are very apt. "The price of lawful public dissent must not be a dread of subjection to an unchecked surveillance power. Nor must the fear of unauthorized official eavesdropping deter vigorous citizen dissent and discussion of Government action in private conversation. For private dissent, no less than open public discourse, is essential to our free society."

The Indian statutes are sorely in need of a comprehensive review. At the very least, the exercise of the Government's power must be made conditional strictly on a judicial warrant



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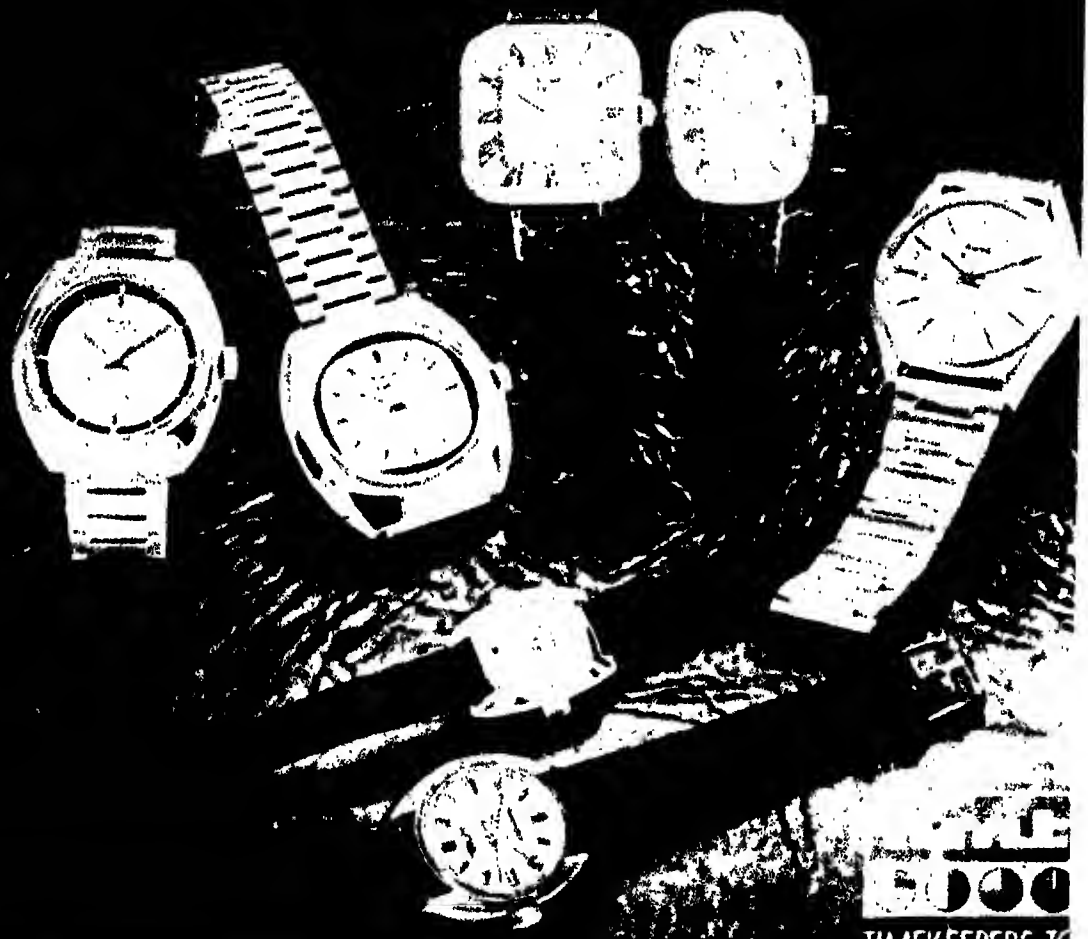
As the night comes, you
think of the day as an event and it's
time to celebrate the day.

As the night comes, you
think of the day as an event and it's
time to celebrate the day.

As the night comes, you
think of the day as an event and it's
time to celebrate the day.

As the night comes, you
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HMI
TIMEKEEPERS TO THE NATION

SPECIAL REPORT

BRITISH hopes of a "broad-based" multi-Party, national coalition, in which Mugabe's influence would be stifled, are dead. Speaking after the Governor had invited him to form a Government, Robert Mugabe once again emphasized the extreme moderation and gradualism of his short term plans—on this showing he could well be expelled from the Fabian Society. Private property is not at risk; Rhodesia is a capitalist state "on which it is necessary to build"; one must start with existing institutions; and in any case Rhodesia already boasts some "socialist" economic organisms such as the Grain Marketing Board. Understandably reluctant to provoke security forces into a coup which now seems increasingly unlikely, Mugabe refuses to be drawn on his future plans for General Walls and the Combined Operations Command, once the General has completed the job the new Prime Minister has given him of integrating the countries' three armies.

The reaction of whites to the election result has been one of shock bordering on trauma. Busloads of cheering militants are driving through the centre of Salisbury while ecstatic crowds parade the streets with a sense of final deliverance from war and oppression. One white lady told me that Mugabe had promised to abolish Christmas and Easter; another doubted that she could now put her mother into an old people's home since such institutions are abolished under communism. "Who will maintain law and order?" demanded a businessman, "Standards will go to pot." A gunsmith snarled "No comment". A schoolgirl in a green uniform asked: "How can they vote for terrorists who burnt down their own schools and houses?" "This country has gone." An insurance clerk wanted to know why "couldn't they have done all this junketing in 1972 and saved us a war?" A good question for Ian Smith.

In Kanbazuma township a circle of young men closes ten-deep round your correspondent. They speak of land, liberation and land again. Two officers of the BSAP scatter the circle with the command "break it up" but almost immediately it reforms. The young men complain bitterly of constant police harassment. A shell-shocked official of the UANC pushes through the crowd and urges me to inform the world that he is now switching allegiance to Mugabe. The small knots of supporters dancing and chanting their affection for the Bishop are mainly women. Clearly, emissaries from the movement have not yet reached these sisters.

The security machine responds with a pantomime display of tanks, armoured vehicles and heavy guns at street intersections and shopping precincts. A middle-aged woman stops me in the street: "I take my hat off to these fellows." Housewives and secretaries bring cups of tea to the men of the Rhodesian Light Infantry. "I'm prepared to give these people one chance, but only one", a trooper remarks. "We gave them schools and we gave them medicine. We built up this country and I'm not prepared to hand it over to a bunch of gooks."

Day after day the police empty ZANU PF's headquarters in Manica Road on the pretext of a bomb scare. The police then head for the most obvious place to conceal a bomb, the Party's files. Nathan Shamuyirira of the Central Committee is arrested at two in the morning on the flimsiest of charges. The better to protect Mugabe, the army rumbles an armada past his house, machine guns trained over the wall—in the face of all this ZANU PF has developed an almost oriental patience. Mugabe claims that some 10,000 party workers, officials, agents and candidates have been arrested in the course of the campaign. At Chiredzi, in the South-East, journalists witnessed the arrest of two ZANU PF polling agents, David Mashingidze and Amos Vandidai. A dead cock (the cock is ZANU PF's symbol) had been nailed to a tree outside the polling station, together with a notice, "Jongwe (cock) is dead". When they noted this down in writing they were arrested—Superintendent Felix Kuttner later explained—under the Miscellaneous Offences Act. Questioned about this, the British

Zimbabwe is bo

An eyewitness report by DAVID CAULFIELD



Election Commissioner, Sir John Boynton, confirmed that it is not an electoral offence to use pen and paper within 100 metres of a polling station. Next day he reported, with the weary shrug characteristic of British officials here, that the two ZANU PF agents would stay in jail anyway. Such incidents have been the rule rather than the exception.

In the European (now called "commercial"), farming area of Wedza the farmers bring their labour force to the mobile polling station on tractor-drawn trailers. Such is their hostility to the foreign Press that one feels like a Yankee carpetbagger among Southern plantation owners as the Confederacy falls. How will their farm workers vote—for the Bishop, surely? "No idea, they're keeping it to themselves." But surely they must know that your farms will be collectivised next Tuesday morning if Mugabe wins? Glowering looks. "If you really want to know the position, what we're afraid of is a minimum wage of \$100 a month." (At present farm workers are lucky to get \$20 a month.) Later an apprehensive farmer just in from police reserve patrol duty in Wedza TTL confides that ZANU PF agitators have been emerging from the reserve at night and poisoning the minds of "Our Africans here."

The farmer leans the barrel of his rifle on his boot. "I believe we've got to forget the past, we can make a great nation here if we all pull together. But if Mugabe stops all the state credit which keeps these farms here afloat, then he's destroying private enterprise. I've been in this war for six years, we didn't start it, I can tell you, I mean I've seen my friends shot and I'm not prepared to take any nonsense, no way. I mean, next time if these external terrorists try anything we won't be so polite about it. We'll sort those gooks out. You've got to keep on top of these guys, I mean, I believe we have a very special type of black man here in Rhodesia, a very decent bloke, but he wants to be left alone to grow his maize and to sleep and have his wives—we should never have imposed our Western ideas on him. I mean, it's the same story in Northern Ireland, isn't it? These people have no excuses at all if we continue to look after them, but they think they can just walk into these farms and take them over."

A Patriotic Front liaison officer gazes in awe at a sophisticated compass belonging to a New Zealand officer



Bishop Abel Muzorewa in a Salisbury street

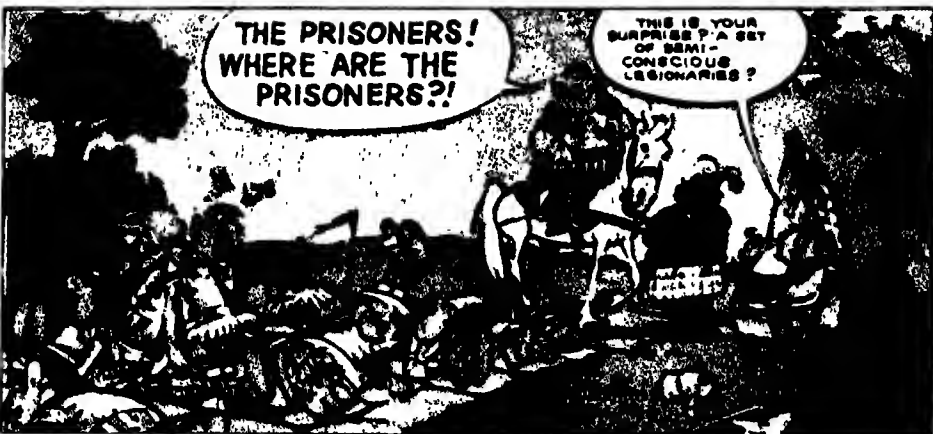
SOUTH of Salisbury, in the Seki Tribal Trust Land four pleasant members of the police anti-terrorist unit, two of them accountants, one a town planner and the other a trainee jeweller, confess how sick and weary they are of serving 140 days a year in the sticks, living off tinned food. "Yes, we're certainly afraid now. If Mugabe gets in we don't know what will happen. We've been distributing these anti-Marxist pamphlets but we're not allowed to meddle in politics. These simple people have no idea what communism is. I can tell you, if there's any trouble in Salisbury we'll be out of here and back with our families, orders or no orders." Would they support a white military coup? A long, rudderless silence follows: they don't know.

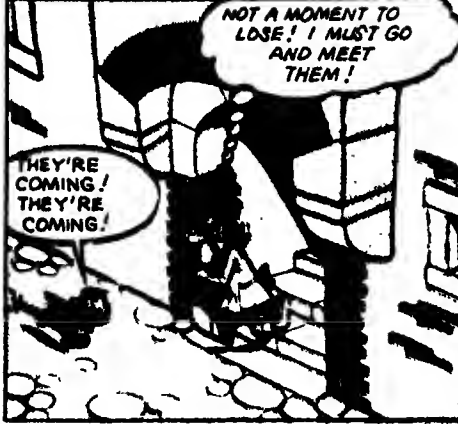
The 270 kilometre drive from Salisbury to the ZANLA assembly point at Delta, close to the Mozambique border, takes one through Mrewa and Mtoko, where the war has been most savage. The blue ribbon of tarmac, kept in perfect repair by the war machine, winds through wild countryside dotted with huge rock kopjies under the vast cloud-flecked African sky. In Delta, a remote camp covering two square kilometres, 2,700 ZANLA guerrillas run up a dirt track in phalanxes of 60 towards the mobile polling station, chanting war cries in unison—*Pamberi Nemugabe*—with the aid of phrases learnt not only in Mozambique (*Viva, Imperialismo*) but even in Swahili territory. Their wolf-pack howls and grunts would, one suspects, bring little joy to the white suburbs of Gwelo and Umtali.

A most astonishing metamorphosis then occurs. Obediently they halt before the commanding hand of a black sergeant of the BSAP—the very man whom, a few weeks ago, they would have shut down as a "sell-out". Dressed in every imaginable garment out of the Portobello Road, and carrying—by law—no weapons to the polling station, they stand silent under the indifferent, neutral scrutiny of white officials: it's as if Peter Pan had appeared with Captain Hook's pirates in Wendy's bedroom. Weeded out as possibly under age by election officials (unlike all other male voters the guerrillas carry no identity papers) the kids sit in a meek knot, as humbly accepting of authority as the young Africans turfed out of buses at police road blocks. For a moment, then, the guerrilla is submerged in the world he rose against.

But not for long. Back in the bandits' camp, with its tattered tents and strips of canvas suspended on rough-hewn poles, every man and woman carries an AK rifle (600 of Delta's contingent are female) and

Continued on page 20





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Guerillas of the Patriotic Front

outsiders may enter only with the written authority of ZANLA's high command in Salisbury. The atmosphere is tense — they are all aware that the security forces have ringed Delta at a distance of five kilometres and on one occasion attempted to refurbish a minefield only 1,500 metres away. Do they intend to break out of their camp into the impenetrable countryside they know so well? "We are soldiers," explains comrade Chris. "Political soldiers. We follow the orders of the Party." What does he feel about the more than 10,000 guerrillas killed during the past three years? He laughs: "War is war. In war you are my enemy. I am your enemy. War is war." Asked any mildly taxing question, regarding, for example, the murder of sell-outs and the closing of schools and dip tanks, comrade Chris responds with a disarming guffaw and the words, "we are not Russia."

The fate of these corralled guerrillas could yet be death. As K. N. Maliudi, foreign minister in the interim government and a member of Sithole's rump "ZANU", remarked in Wedza township: "After next week I expect all the foreigners will have gone and probably we will do a little bit of a bloodbath in this country." Ominous for ZANLA is the lead taken by Nkomo in integrating ZIPRA units with the security forces — indeed the PF leader joined the Rhodesian army commander, General Macintyre in inspecting a guard of honour composed not only of ZIPRA but also of the mounted Grey's Scouts who hunted them down on South African horses across the open plains of Matabeleland. Once again the whites are making the smart moves, shrewdly playing on Nkomo's ambitions in order to neutralise Mugabe's vision of a new national army built round the nucleus of ZANLA and ZIPRA.

As British, Rhodesians and South Africans well understand, ZANU PF represents the closest approximation to a revolutionary Party in Zimbabwe. Despite its Fabian manifesto, the Marxist undercurrent runs strong and deep. Having put the war into cold storage, Mugabe, like Kwame Nkrumah before him, will seek first the political kingdom, hoping in the process to avoid the fate of Patrice Lumumba. But if his followers are denied their inheritance there will be violence. More than once I have heard in the streets and countryside: "ZANU is the people, opposition to ZANU will be treason against the people." This is not a Party dedicated in the long term to electoral democracy, and the constant invocations to the Comrade President, the Central Committee and the High Command sound ominous.

Yet Mugabe himself is a man of exceptional calibre and integrity who may succeed in checking the more intolerant elements within his ranks. It is symptomatic of the imbecility prevailing within the white mental laager that every other white dreams of shooting the men most likely to fashion an African society in which Europeans with badly needed skills can work in peace and prosperity.

(By arrangement with "New Statesman")

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Death rite for a departed spy

By VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAM

GEORGE Smiley, one-time British Intelligence chief, is back from retirement in pursuit of his Black Grail—*karä*—code name for his formidable Russian adversary, the man who engineered the treason of agent Bill Haydon, and incidentally also spirited him into Ann Smiley's bed. (Carre's earlier *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*). If you are not a Carre regular, get these facts clear and read on—plot and narrative in the impeccable Carre style; and reflecting the vicious real-life goings-on in the uncinical world of agents and double-agents.

Smiley's return begins as a death rite for a departed spy, develops into a relentless chase, to end in a sort of modern-day Holmes-Moriarty climax minus the melodrama. All the Carre elements are there including the peculiar spy jargon, familiarity with which gives the regular thriller reader what can only be described as a sense of 'belonging'—though I'm not sure if that entirely expresses it. It's much the same feeling an Edgar Wallace fan has towards the inner nuances of the London thief's argot of which Wallace was a master.

For the thriller addict, *Smiley's People* is unput-down-able, in much the same degree as, say a Len Deighton, an Alistair Maclean or a Victor Canning in the sense that it has all the ingredients of a first-class spy story—and one that unfolds so graphically that you can simultaneously visualize each frame of the film it will eventually end up as. The meticulous attention to detail is reminiscent of Brian Garfield's *Hop Scotch*. And one can imagine the copious notes and drafts that must have gone into the writing of *Smiley's People* which is, by thriller standards, on the lengthy side.

If you are looking out for surprises, twists and heroics you'll be disappointed. No special who-dun-it formula here, nor any dramatic denouement. The end is low-key and played down, which is as it would be in real life. The Russians are of course painted black, and if the author is fair enough not to paint the British white, he does colour them a rather light shade of grey.

For the Carre addict I would say that the latest offering, though gripping, will not arouse the brooding horror that *The Spy who Came in from the Cold* must have. The double-dealing, buck-passing and coldblooded opportunism that abound in Smiley's world are all old hat to the inured thriller reader. One is no longer all that sensitive even to sensational real-life revelations about Philby, Blunt and the lot, and more recently the Christina Onassis rigmarole. If fiction is distastefully similar to fact, and sometimes even portends events, it largely leaves the blasé reader cold.

I say this not in disparagement of Carre's realism. But the truth is that when a spy story breaks new ground and then is followed by a host of similar equally well-written and suspenseful stories, then it is the first one or the first one which a particular reader reads, that alone remains truly memorable. The others merely belong to the genre. But that is not Carre's fault and does not make *Smiley's People* less readable.

Two things strike me about Carre in this as well as other books. One is that his writing clearly if unselfconsciously reveals his public school upbringing. And while his rejection of the values ingrained by such a tradition also comes across, it does not emerge as irrevocably and forcefully as one can distinctly feel it come through from Len Deighton's nameless hero who belongs to the same professional breed as George Smiley.

The other point that strikes me every time I read Carre is the strong literary quality of his style. And while a highbrow would undoubtedly disagree with me, I rather feel that a thriller which is racy written without any frills is a better thriller than one whose literary overtones slow down the pace and dilute the suspense.



John le Carré

If form must be wholly functional for optimum results I think a thriller that has the essentials of its category, and little else, is more satisfying than a thriller that has too many subtle details of characterization that blend more comfortably into a class of fiction where psychological insight of much greater depth is called for. This is not to imply that Carre's handling of his subject is clumsy. There is no denying his masterly story-telling style but the absence of a more earthy approach, I feel, waters down the impact of the thriller element.

I have a theory, which I am convinced is shared by other lowbrow thriller addicts, that a thriller should be a thriller first and last and preferably nothing else. It can't be a good thriller unless it's well-written and that's literary enough. Even realism is not an absolute must. There is nothing realistic about the James Bond stories for many of the Alistair Macleans and Victor Cannings. I don't think this detracts from their merit as thrillers. Of course, while the constant depiction of the hero-spy as a superman reads well enough in print, it inevitably comes across on the screen as a spoof. All the James Bond films have this spoof quality. On the other hand, the realism of Carre and Deighton lends itself very effectively to cinema.

One can appreciate the literary quality of Carre only if one has the leisure to savour it. On that score Carre certainly reached a peak with *The Honourable School-boy*. While *Smiley's People* was engrossing it did make me impatient at times. A sort of why-don't-you-get-on-with-the-story feeling tempts one to indulge in a bit of judicious skipping especially if one is the type who simply can't resist peeping into the last page. For every one allusion I may have understood, and only just at that. (Tonlouse-Lantrec faces, for example) there must be umpteen that went over my head. And while that is admittedly no credit to me, it doesn't make *Smiley's People* a better thriller than it could be.

I do not for a minute question Carre's prerogative to apply a thicker literary polish than others of his ilk. But there is a cult by which the thriller writer who appeals to the highbrow receives better critical appreciation than the pure entertainer. This I think is not quite fair. I expect a thriller to have a strong, slick plot and the dialogue preferably witty. If there are other elements that do not bolster this crucial elements of the spy story, then however commendable they may be in themselves they only detract from its value.

Smiley's People by John le Carré. Hodder and Stoughton; 277 pages. Price not stated.

KHAAS BAAT

IN big budget Hindi films like *Lok Parlok*, she provided the glamour. In Malayalam films bordering on porno, she was, made to strip. She even played a lesbian once. And then director K. Viswanath who made Jayapradha a big star in his musical hit *Siri Siri Muva* decided to transform Manju Bhargavi from a sex bomb into an actress of merit. And his success has become a topic of discussion in the film industry in the

South. Viswanath's new film *Sankarabharanam* is doing really well at the box office and may be shortly remade in Tamil. From the financial angle, the new venture appears to be an improvement on *Siri Siri Muva*.

Balu Mahendran has handled the camera very well and it disproves the subtle campaign against Balu that he only does good work when his favourite Shoba is acting.

RAMESHWARI appeared in an arty-arty Kannada film *Kankana* before she

*Sridevi in "Kaksha",
a Telgu film*

made it big in Hindi films. Her elder sister, a doctor by profession, is also obsessed with acting and has a couple of assignments lined up in Tamil. Unlike Rameshwari she didn't do a stint in Pune but decided to try her luck on her own.

WHEN journalists representing English magazines go to studios, some film-makers strain themselves to explain some sequences in English though they aren't really conversant in the language. And they have evolved their own lingo. "Just hold on", a veteran director told me. "You look up there. My heroine is hiding behind the door. And suddenly the villain will try to 'spoil' her." 'Spoil' is the euphemism for rape. The next day the same director told me gleefully: "Today I am shooting a scene showing a housewife being polluted..." Polluted? The director explained: "You see she's married and her husband's best friend pollutes her". Well, if it's the villain, he 'spoils' and if it's the hero, he 'pollutes'.

UP-COMING Sumalatha is a bit worried that too much is being made about her (rather her mother's) demand for fabulous remunerations. It's a fact that she's in terrific demand and her mother says that only by raising the price was she was able to keep away some producers. But then, why not be honest and explain that your chubby daughter has enough assignments? As a matter of fact, Sumalatha isn't getting half of what Rathi Aqnihotri and other top heroines are getting. But she does have couple of big films including *Ravi Chandra* opposite Rajkumar. Lakshmi too is acting in the film but probably Sumalatha will be much more exciting on the screen.

ACTOR Muthuraman's venture *Panam Penn Pasam* isn't doing badly when you compare its profits to some of his recent films but then when he has a co-hero like Vijayan most of the credit for the modest run of the film (directed by M. A. Kaja) is hogged by you know whom.

PIOUSJI

KHAAS BAAT

THE alleged secret marriage of Vinod Mehra with Bindiya Goswami first sounded incredible. Not a nice, steady, respectable boy like our Vinod, everybody said—why he even plays the boy-next-door, gentle in his looks and behaviour! And he got married to that nice, sweet girl last year at a well-publicised ceremony. His mother had selected the girl, and the choice was commendable. Whenever there were rumours about his familiarity with Bindiya, he would fume and flare out his nostrils in a rage. He refused to discuss Bindiya with filmi journalists. But he certainly did nothing to arrest these rumours. It is alleged that he was deeply involved with Bindiya before he married that nice gharelu Meena. He didn't want to have an actress for a wife, as all heroes believe, and so married the girl his Ma chose. But his so-called involvement with Bindiya grew right after the marriage, and they are doing a lot of films together. Finally they decided they couldn't live without each other and the bungalow he had bought, to move in to after his marriage and which had been left unoccupied for some mysterious reason, now houses him and Bindiya. He denies that they got married according to the tenets of Sufi religion to which they are rumoured to have converted themselves. He insists that she goes home every night! And yet, his wife stays with her mother-in-law in the old flat! If this is true, are secret marriages a habit with Vinod? Long ago, he was "married" to Rekha and now this! In the wake of the Zeenat-Sanjay secret alliance, was it a bid to prove that he was the "original"? Of late, Bindiya has been exercising a growing influence on his life. The two love-birds are now in a fix because Meena doesn't agree with the idea of divorce.

AGREED Shatru is a real clown and can draw laughter each minute of the day. But is it really necessary to have these comic scenes wherever he goes? There is this fellow who follows on Shatru's heels



Bindiya : One for the bungalow



Shabana likes Zaheer, bespectacled Pakistani (bat) swinger

like a puppy, with an enormous aluminium chair held in front of him for his lord and master. If Shatru happens to be standing, I guess it would be nice to have a valet and a chair handy, but when the valet takes things a bit too far, like bringing the chair on the steps, if Shatru happens to stand there or turning the chair this way and that, trying to keep up with his master's hip-movements, etc it makes you split with laughter! And Shatru himself is very good at telling very funny stories. These go together to make Shatru the funniest man in Bombay's filmdom

WHEN the Pakistanis visited Bombay, it was rumoured that Shabana Azmi became very interested in all Zaheer Abbas had to say. In fact she was so interested that she kept listening to him wherever he went—with no eyes for anyone else

LIKE we said before in SUNDAY, the comeback of Parveen Babi didn't create too easy a pace: there was this feeling that once she's done it, she can get up and go away again, leaving producers in the lurch. There was an air of uncertainty about her present plans and her immediate future. When she did report for work on Sippy's prestigious project Shagan and when one met her, she seemed okay, but not her cheerful, smiling self. The uncertainty about Parveen's return had lent an air of patience and film-producers are a very patient lot generally. Bang in the middle of her shooting-schedules which she had been honouring since she returned, Parveen just left, once more! And she isn't coming back again—it is as final as that! By the time news spread that she had left, some alarmed people tried to contact her at her place. Before that, she is alleged to have cleaned up traces of her whereabouts—like selling off her flat, car and other assets! To the producers who were clever enough to have dropped her from their half-made films, this has come as a relief—at least she isn't around to give them guilt pangs.

Blind lathi-charge

Delhi police's hour of shame



Courtesy: Hindustan Times

THE first glimpse of the new muscle that the police has acquired after the change of Government was seen on March 16, the World Day of the Disabled. While the Union Education Minister was giving a long speech at a function a few miles away, on the need to help the handicapped, the men of the Delhi Police force were busy lathi-charging a group of blind people whose only fault was that they wanted to meet the Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi.

The National Federation of the Blind had organized a march from their office at Paharganj to Mrs Gandhi's Safdarjung Road residence on the occasion of Disabled Day to present her with a memorandum of demands. The Federation had taken permission from the police beforehand and the straggly procession of 225 blind men who groped their way to the Prime Minister's residence had little idea of what was to follow.

The procession which was escorted by ten policemen of the Paharganj police station and two traffic policemen, made their way slowly towards Mrs Gandhi's house without much trouble—till they reached Parliament Street. At this point they were told that they could not proceed any further since Section 144 CRPC was in force there which did not allow an assembly of more than four persons. They were also told that Mrs. Gandhi did not meet anybody on Sunday, and the blind men could meet her on another day.

This was a bitter disappointment to the blind. They protested that they had taken permission well in

advance and even if Section 144 had been suddenly declared, why had they not been informed earlier by the policemen who were escorting them? "We have come so far and we will not go away so easily," the Federation secretary Santosh Rungta told the police.

By this time about a hundred policemen had converged on the spot and under the supervision of the Parliament Street Station House Officer, R. L. Behl, started pushing back the procession. This further set the back up of the blind who squatted on the road, refusing to move. They said that the police would have to arrest them if they wanted to remove them. Tension rapidly mounted as the police grew increasingly exasperated at the blind protestors' adamant attitude.

Suddenly, the police men decided it was time to act and pounced upon Santosh Rungta and arrested him. Immediately, the other blind people converged on the spot and the melee that followed soon turned into a grappling match between the police and the blind in which the former used their lathis freely.

Complete chaos prevailed among the blind demonstrators who ran helter skelter, trying to escape the searing lathi blows. At this point some passers-by intervened, pleading with the police not to use their lathis on the helpless blind people. By the time the police relented, three blind persons had already been seriously injured and a number of them bore bruises on their faces and bodies. Not satisfied at this, the police arrested more than a 100

blind persons on charges of rioting.

The arrested men were herded into police vans and taken to the Parliament Street police station, where another strange drama started. According to the blind, one of them, Laxman Das, who was protesting very loudly at the police treatment was taken to another room and beaten up and abused in filthy language. When the other blind men realised that Laxman Das was missing, they created an uproar, asking for him to be produced. Frightened, the police brought him back.

The blind men were made to wait in the Parliament Street police station for about three hours from 1 to 4 pm, when they were again packed into police vans and taken to the Patiala House Courts. Here they were left inside the vans for more than three hours. Throughout this time they were refused water or food. When they asked the constables standing guard outside to let them out, or at least open the vans' doors so that they could breathe some fresh air, the constables told them "Only our officers have keys for the vans. You have to wait".

Finally, the police took the Federation secretary Rungta to the Patiala House Court Magistrate, Mr K. C. Lohiya. According to Rungta, the magistrate asked him whether he and his colleagues would behave in future. When Rungta said they would again try to reach the Prime Minister's residence if released, the magistrate reportedly told him that the blind men would then have to spend the night in Tihar Jail.

After this brief interview Rungta was brought back and locked up with his companions in the van. Around 8 pm, the van's doors were opened and the blind prisoners were told that they could now get down and drink water. The men breathed sighs of relief. Most of them were without food and water for nearly the whole day. As if this were not enough, a cruel trick was played on them again. As they were lining up for water, the police took off in the vans, leaving them to fend for themselves. To add to their misery, the police men had also taken away their sticks with which they normally felt their way about on the streets.

Meanwhile the three injured persons were first taken to police hospital. Two of them were discharged but one of them, Ramesh Chandra Soni, who suffered multiple bruises on his back and waist, was admitted to Lady Irwin Hospital. According to Soni, he was not given any food or water the whole day and night in spite of repeated requests.

The incident figured prominently in the next day's newspapers and when the blind went to the Prime Minister's residence the next morning, the police who seemed vastly

sobered, did not prevent them from meeting her. Mrs Gandhi herself expressed deep regret at the previous day's incident and announced that a judicial enquiry would be started into it. The Parliament Street SHO has been suspended pending the inquiry's findings.

This announcement failed to mollify irate Opposition members in Parliament. The very same day, they rose unitedly in the Lok Sabha and staged an angry walkout after the speaker refused to permit a discussion on the incident. Later both Mrs Gandhi and the Home Minister Zail Singh expressed their regret but the latter insisted on describing the lathi-charge as a "minor scuffle".

While the blind as well as eyewitnesses to the incident say that the police had unnecessarily used brute force on the helpless people the police stoically maintain that it was the blind and not they who were at fault. The New Delhi District Commissioner of Police P. R. S. Brar, said, it's an attempt by the Press to sensationalise a minor incident. "We were trying to help the blind and there was just a minor scuffle." He also said that the police had received intelligence reports on March 15 that the blind demonstrators were planning to "court arrest" and "might turn violent".

AJOY BOSE, New Delhi

Another churchman murdered

But justice remains elusive

ST. ANNE'S Catholic Church at Sasaram in Bihar nestles among the gently sloping foothills of the region. It is an area of peace and tranquillity, a sylvan setting not far from the tomb of the great Sher Shah. The normal church service was held on the evening of March 7, as it was the first Friday of the month. There was the usual knot of parishioners gathered for the mass which was conducted by Father Matthew, the spiritual head of the mission. The final benediction over, Father Matthew rose and sat on a bench behind the catechists and the village teachers who had participated in the evening service.

Without any warning, the calm was shattered. Four armed men clad in rustic garments burst into the churchyard and as they approached the priest, one of them called out "Here is the man". Immediately another priest, Brother D'Souza, known in the area as Swamy Shilanand, intervened to try and reason with the intruders. The words of the Catholic "Swamy" appeared to have some sort of an effect on the armed men. One of them shouted "Don't touch him," and the others backed away from the bearded monk who was clad in his customary saffron robe.

But there was no mercy for Father Matthew. One of the marauders held a knife at his ribs, while another covered him at gunpoint and dragged him away to his residence which was barely ten yards away. Inside the house was Father Joseph Mann, an American who had founded the church in the Sixties for the spiritual uplift of the local people. But there was nothing he could do to help Father Matthew. The aged American was disabled and too feeble to try and help.

Father Matthew was dragged into his own room by the two men, who



Father Matthew

snatched the keys of the locker from him and went on the rampage. Everything in the room was rummaged through; they pocketed all the cash they found and in addition took away everything else they could lay their eyes on.

The suspense mounted outside till the sound of a single gunshot rent the deadly silence of the night. There were about thirty people, mostly villagers, present inside the church, all of whom had participated in the evening service. Along with two other priests they tried to get out and raise the alarm but in vain. They were kept at bay by one of the remaining gunmen. Outside, the driver of the mission jeep tried to drive out and race to the police station but the odds were against him. The sound of the engine being started brought the fourth gunman in his path and the valiant attempt proved fruitless.

Miraculously, one of the staff

members managed to sneak out and break through the boundary of the mission to inform the police. But luck that night was not on the side of the innocent. A police posse had already left to investigate a murder that had taken place earlier that evening.

By the time the police did arrive, it was all over. The intruders had left and the single gunshot had claimed the life of Father Matthew. There were deep injuries on his forehead and left temple, while the right temple was no longer recognisable with the bullet wound. To all intents and purposes, Father Matthew had been shot at point-blank range.

MONNAPARAMBIL Matthew would have been 42 on June 14 this year. The jovial warmhearted priest came from a traditional Catholic family of Arakulam, in Kerala. After completing his early education first at Chemperi district and later at Calicut he joined the Society of Jesus in Patna in 1960. He then studied philosophy and theology in Pune and Kurseong before he was finally ordained as a priest in 1972. After a stint with the Catholic Church, Shahpur, in Bhojpur district, he finally moved to St. Anne's Church at Sasaram in 1975. It was there that he took over the task of looking after the Catholic population of the area—about 200 of them—in addition to organising philanthropic work for the poor.

It is difficult to find a possible reason for the murder, although there had been a certain amount of friction between the dead priest and the local people. On one occasion Father Matthew had taken strong action against some teachers of the area. On another he had requested the parents of students at the local school to donate foodgrain to help the poor, a gesture that had been resented by the students, who had observed a two-day strike. In addition, Father Matthew had been pursuing a case against culprits who had attacked the nearby convent last year, which may have antagonised several people. Even in view of all these theories, it is difficult to pin down personal vendetta as the cause of the murder.

THE Sasaram case cannot be taken in isolation. The Vicar General of the Patna diocese, Father B. J. Osta relates several gory incidents that have taken place in Bihar in the recent past, leaving those connected with the Church "under constant fear of repression and persecution". He can instantly call to mind ten cases relating to harassment, torture, threats, injuries and murder.

On March 29, 1979, the sisters of the convent school adjacent to the mission where Father Matthew was murdered were sitting down to their dinner when seven gunmen entered the premises through the kitchen. The sisters were made to line up and were beaten up by the gunmen who then seized their keys and decamped with all the money on the premises.

In addition they also took with them a tape recorder, a radio, wristwatches and whatever else they could carry. In the melee, four of the young hostel girls were injured.

There have been other instances as well. Father Goveas was hacked to death in the most brutal manner in January 1966. Father Welzmler was attacked by thieves in May the same year. The Nazer mission in Monghyr district was attacked by a mob in April 1967 and the house in which Father Francis and some others were sheltering was set on fire. When the occupants stumbled out, Father Francies was manhandled by the mob. The late Father Farrell was attacked in Chaupatia, West Champaran; he was trussed with ropes and relieved of all his valuables. Even Father Manu, the founder of the Sasaram mission, had been shot at on three occasions, the first of which was in 1965. In fact, even today, the ailing priest still has fragments of pellets embedded in his body, an all-too-real reminder of the attacks.

There are endless other cases. The mission church of Basauni in Monghyr district is having its own problems with a sadhu of the locality. The sadhu, who is alleged to have encroached on the mission's land, has involved the priests in endless litigation, one of his accusations being that a priest from the church stole an idol from a temple. In Nawadah district, on October 23, 1979 Father Sequire was handcuffed and paraded in public at the local bazar because an FIR (First Information Report) lodged with the police charges the priest with the attempted murder of a villager. Church authorities, however, point out that the priest had served local harijans for 14 years, and that the claim is sheer nonsense. It is nothing short of "humiliation to a Catholic priest", they insist. Others recall a similar incident when Father Matthew himself was beaten up severely by a mob while conducting a prayer service.

Yet another incident that shook the Catholic world was the murder of Father Martins'k at the Mokameh mission, on February 20 last year. Yet, Church authorities point out, the culprits in most cases have not been brought to book. In only one case has the law taken its course. The culprits behind an attack on priests at Mupra village in Sitamarhi were given life sentences, but such incidents continue to occur and the culprits remain at large.

The Vicar General says "We were very insecure during the Janata rule. Fanaticism was right on top after the Freedom of Religion Bill was mooted". Even though the Bill has only been passed in three states of the country, repression continues. Sometimes, according to the Vicar General, there is general hostility from the religious groups and sometimes from local caste leaders who take umbrage at the Christian work among the harijans. In some areas the air remains charged with tension and all christian teaching about non-violence are

in danger of being ignored.

What has the Patna diocese done for the people of Bihar? It furnishes a quick list. It runs 113 primary schools and secondary schools, 17 high schools, one college—the premier women's college in Patna—three training and teaching institutions in addition to three nurses' and midwives' institutions. That is not all. There are also 32 dispensaries, 12 orphanages, three homes for the old and disabled, besides several leper centres.

The state of Bihar has a total Catholic population of 6.5 lakhs, so it is no surprise that Christians feel that they have as much right as any others to preach their religion. On March 4, 1979, a year and three days before the murder of Father Matthew, a local Hindi daily had carried an editorial to which a rejoinder was sent by the general secretary of the Christian Welfare Association, Bihar. The matter seemed to be forgotten till the secretary received an anonymous letter which claimed that Jesus Christ had in fact come to India to learn yoga from the Buddhists. The letter added that all religions in the world originated from Hinduism and suggested that the secretary himself

convert to Hinduism. The secretary had no knowledge about Indian religions and culture. It emphasised. The most virulent part of the letter is supposed to have said something to the effect that if Christians do not convert to Hinduism, there will be no alternative but to gun them down. Copies of this letter were also sent to the Governor of Bihar and the police.

As if by coincidence, 40 bishops had assembled at a conference in Patna on the day that Father Matthew was murdered. "We view with anguish and concern all these affronts to human dignity and gross violations of human rights," they said in a joint statement. They went on to voice their concern at the recurrence of atrocities against harijans, minorities and other weaker sections. They feel it is something much worse than the mere breakdown of law and order, and have asked for a CBI probe into the incident. "The time has come," the statement said, to "take a united stand against all such cases of flagrant injustice". Six persons have since been arrested.

S. P. SAGAR, Sasaram

Death in police custody

Neither the first nor last

Name In Full Kamal Thakur
Thakur
 Designation ...
 District ...
 Signature ...



Kamal Thakur's identity card

ON the fateful evening of February 26, 25-year-old Kamal Thakur sat gossiping with his friends a stone's throw away from his lowly railway quarters in Golmohur colony near the Howrah railway station. His shoes were carefully polished and he had donned a new pair of trousers. Kamal was all set to go to a colleague's wedding that night. His colleague waited in vain. At about 7.30 pm, a posse of policemen from the adjoining Golabari police station took Kamal away and put him in the thana lock-up room for the night. The next morning while still in police custody, Kamal Thakur died and his friend who had in the mean time become a married man threw away the wedding sweets he had kept

aside for Kamal. Kamal's name will be added to the long list of unfortunate men and women who have died in police custody over the years in India.

Kamal, whose real name was Pro-nobendra Nath Thakur, was employed as a khalasi with Eastern Railways in Howrah. Third among five brothers, Kamal's retired father was also with the railways. According to the statement prepared by the police after Kamal's death, he was arrested in connection with case number 15 dated 4.2.80 under sections 326 and 307 of the Indian Penal Code and sections 6 (3) of the Indian Explosives Act. The police case alleged that Kamal, along with a "local rowdy", Nemai Roy, and a few others

had attacked Manik Chand Singh's hotel located in the vicinity. The "mi creants" allegedly used bombs and Singh had to be hospitalised with grave injuries. Soon after the incident, Nema Roy surrendered in the court of the subdivisional judicial magistrate, Howrah and eventually on February 26, Kamal was arrested in the railway colony. Police spokesmen alleged that Kamal Thakur was a local rough with a criminal background and, between 1974 and 1980, he was involved in six cases for offences under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, the Explosive Substances Act and the Maintenance of Public Order Act. Of these, three cases were for attempted murder.

After his arrest on the evening of February 26, Kamal spent the night in the police lock-up along with other detainees. Next morning, the police decided to take him to the emergency ward of the Howrah General Hospital. At 11.30 am, the hospital informed the Howrah police station that Kamal had been brought to the hospital in "dead condition". The autopsy later revealed that Kamal's death was caused by injuries which were ante mortem and homicidal in nature. A high-ranking police officer who met me, said: "Obviously, Kamal was alive when he was arrested. He may have died in the police lock-up, on the way to the hospital or after reaching the hospital. But one thing is very clear: he died in police custody".

It was thus an "unnatural death case" and because the death took place while Kamal was in police custody, according to the statutory rules, a magisterial enquiry was conducted by the executive magistrate, Howrah. On the basis of his findings, a murder case (number 63/80) under 302 of the IPC was registered at Golabari police station on February 28 and the investigation into Kamal's death has been handed over to the CID. Kamal's father has also filed a criminal suit against the inspector-in-charge, Golabari thana, and other officers attached to the police station. Since there were apprehensions that the Golabari policemen may obstruct the process of investigation into Kamal's death, the inspector-in-charge, a sub-inspector and two constables of the thana who had arrested Kamal on February 26, were transferred. Mr Swarup Mukherjee, SP, Howrah was given special instructions to leave no stone unturned in bringing the culprits to book.

SOON after Kamal's death, the inevitable occurred. Congress (I) MLAs raised a hue and cry in the State Assembly. The Party's spokesmen described Kamal as a Congress (I) worker who was killed by the police at the behest of the State's ruling coalition, the Left Front. Various speakers from the opposition benches said that Kamal's death in police custody reflected the deterioration law and order situation in West Bengal and demanded the Government's resolute action on this issue. When this

correspondent visited Golmohur colony, some people said that Kamal was a Congress (I) worker while a large number of people thought otherwise.

A Bihari shopkeeper who owns a shop near the railway colony said: "The poor youth died in police custody. For their own selfish reasons some people are now saying that he was a Congress (I) worker. I don't know whether he was one during his life or he has been made one posthumously. But Saheb, the police's zoolum is well known. They should have thought about Kamal's old parents before doing what they did when he was in their custody". In the State Assembly, Jyoti Basu declared that "Kamal was not known to have affiliation to any political Party. No political Party except in the present instance claimed him as a supporter on earlier occasions". He also promised that the Government "is firm in its resolve to take appropriate action against persons whose complicity in the tragic and regrettable affair may come to light in the course of the investigation".

Eventually, it's for the courts to decide whether Kamal was killed by the policemen or he succumbed to the injuries which the police claim Kamal had on his person at the time of arrest. Kamal's case has not set any precedents because the practice of torture by the police are both widespread and have been investigated by several commissions of inquiry. Thana officials confess in private conversation that beating up an accused is the most common thing at police stations. Sometimes the thrashing is meted out with the sole intention of extracting a statement and on other occasions to teach the accused a lesson. The police baton is the instrument normally used for

punishment and applied freely on the accused's palms or soles. Such punishment, apart from causing searing pain does not leave behind any evidence of torture for the courts to detect. Often, a blanket is wrapped around the person before the beating so that no external injuries are inflicted. A police officer who is now engaged in writing a thesis on police behaviour said that in many thanas there are sub-inspectors who love beating people in the lock-up, sometimes for sadistic pleasure alone. And once in a while, someone is beaten up more than others and may sustain injuries which may prove fatal. A policeman usually takes a detainee to an adjoining room in the thana and uses the lathi.

Police brutality does not end within the confines of a thana though it is here that teenage girls have been raped and detainees done to death. Several commissions have been instituted in the past to look into "police encounters" and "jail firings" too. Wrongful detention and misuse of power entrusted in the hands of policemen has been proved on umpteen occasions. And police brutality and inefficiency has generally no direct connection with ruling Parties; the practice is too deep rooted to be erased within the short period of any Party's regime. The Left Front, after it came to power in mid-77, made an attempt to reorganise the police force and weed out corruption and high-handed methods which had become as good as Police Manual regulations. Chief Minister Jyoti Basu was not however over-optimistic. He said: "The mentality of the police cannot be changed overnight. It will take some time".

S.N.M. ABDI, Calcutta

Hard times



THE tempestuous daughter of the late Pakistani President Bhutto, is in trouble with her Partymen according to George Fernandes. Benazir, 26, who donned the mantle of her father as Party leader, after he was hanged, is committed to anti-imperialism, socialism and secularism. She talks about this to her Partymen in the way her father did. But with one difference—she is genuine while

Bhutto was what is called "pragmatic". "This," says Fernandes, "is not liked by bigwigs of the Pakistan People's Party, who have used anti-imperialist and pro-socialist slogans only to rally round the poor. Bhutto's commitment to the poor was qualitatively the same as Mrs Gandhi's commitment to *Garibi Hatao*. It was a convenient, unfailing vote-gathering exercise". As for the General Secretary of the People's Party, General Tikka Khan, says Fernandes, he is as paralysed as our Chandra Shekhar was on the night of January 6 when the Parliamentary election results were coming in and he said dazedly, "What will happen now? What are we going to do?" This in short is the opposition in Pakistan to the dictatorship of Zia-ul-Haq, under whose inhuman martial law a person gets seven years' imprisonment and lashes if he or she dares to make a political statement even to the foreign Press.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

A village in turmoil

Caste friction thwarts a relief scheme

THE fate of the food-for-work (FFW) programme at Dhanana, a dusty, sprawling, Jat-dominated village 17 km from Bhiwani, hangs precariously in the balance. An ugly Jat-Harijan caste war threatens to stop all work, deprive hundreds of innocent villagers of their daily quotas of wheat, and destroy the waste foundation of the scheme — a sense of community. Working together now seems almost impossible for the Jat and the Harijan: both see themselves divided by caste and fate, born to live and work apart.

The caste conflict, though still subdued, is an outcome of the FFW scheme itself. The Jats, grudging the manner in which Harijans were toiling on the sites in large numbers and being handsomely paid for it, felt cheated and manoeuvred to push them out. The Harijans protested and complained, but to no avail. The Jats meanwhile got more bitter. Their jealousy grew into hatred. The result was a cruel social boycott: the landless Harijans were ordered to stay away, not only from the FFW sites but also other agricultural plots. Most Harijans now remain confined to their own quarters, left with no other means of livelihood.

Dhanana, a rough, bumpy, 20-minute bus ride from Bhiwani, is a rugged, scattered hamlet with remarkably city-like collections of houses in some parts. The buildings, which rise amidst crowds of thatched roofs stand as symbols of the Harijans' growing prosperity. Many of them belong to men who have found jobs in sundry Government departments, from the state transport service to the Army, thanks to the preference they get in recruitment procedures. Economic independence was followed by a new consciousness of their rights. Some of the employed Harijans are active trade unionists who have introduced their village brethren to unfamiliar ideas of revolt. Soon, the Harijans saw themselves at par with the Jats, who, in turn, found their feudal relationship with landless Harijans threatened. Even as the Jats owned most of the land, the Harijans do not look to them, but to cities and towns for work. Of course, a large number of Harijans who survive on odd chores like cleaning houses and streets, still lead a hand-to-mouth existence. The ban on Harijan labour has deprived them of a vital means of livelihood — agricultural wages.

The caste war is a sequel to the FFW scheme's slow but sure progress over the previous year. Work on the scheme started on March 27, 1979, between which date and the end of January a total of 4,800 man-days of employment was generated. A number of impressive projects were completed. Several roads and



The Harijan basti

lanes were paved with mud, wells dug in Harijan localities, walls erected around a girls' primary school and public lavatories for men and women built. The total number of beneficiaries for the period is estimated at 600, about half of whom are women. Six kg of wheat was given everyday for digging a trench ten feet by ten feet, to a lead of eight feet. For those owning camels and bullocks, the work allotted was much more, for 18 kg of wheat per day.

All work on the projects is planned and conducted by the ten-member village panchayat. Only two of the members are Harijans, Krishan Chand, a valmiki, and Gopi Ram, a chamar. There are two brahmins in the body, another person named Krishan Chand and Munni Ram, while the rest, Chandan Singh, Gandhi, Dulcep, Dope Singh, the wife of Megh Raj and the headman, Rameshwar, are Jats.

Work had been going on for some time on a large water tank in the village. On January 8, the headman Rameshwar declared that only those who owned animals should turn up at the site. The work was too heavy for men, and since the digging was making slow progress, he said it

would be done faster with camels and bullocks. The fiat eliminated Harijans, most of whom do not own camels or bullocks. Frustrated and angry, the Harijans went in a delegation to Bhiwani and reported the matter to the Deputy Commissioner, Mr Chander Singh. Mr Singh assured them of all help and referred the matter to the sub-divisional magistrate, Mr Prahlad Singh. The SDM in turn contacted the village headman, Rameshwar. But the worst was yet to come. Instead of redressing the Harijans' grievances the headman issued another fiat, forbidding any encroachment on agricultural plots. Anyone found guilty of doing so would be fined Rs 25, he warned. The Harijans saw in this an act of vengeance. Though outwardly meant to prevent unauthorised encroachment on land, the order was actually aimed against Harijans, since most of them depend solely on agricultural wages from work on others' — especially the Jats' — plots.

The effect of the order was to keep the Harijans confined to their own localities. Tlara Panna, Kalan and Milan. It was forcible interment. There was no way they could go to, or even find work. Many of them were forced to depend on each others' charity. The few who had animals gave them away to relatives far and near, because fodder could not be brought from the fields. Even at the time of writing, most of them were living in intense fear. "Hamara koi nahi sundi," (No one listens to us) groaned an old Harijan. "They do not let us go to the fields, even go out of the village. We cannot do anything. We are 'weak, and poor'". he went on pitifully.

Many Harijans, the poorest among them, could hardly even have a square meal a day. Unable to bear the hardship, a few of them, Nihala, Arbaroo, Balla and Sher Singh, sold off their belongings and fled the village to find work elsewhere. Work on the FFW projects had completely stopped for about a month. News of unrest in the village spread, and the "bandh" created a stir. But surprisingly, none of the authorities seemed concerned. All along, the police in the village remained silent spectators to the intimidation of Harijans.

The "bandh" was still on when this reporter visited the village. In spite of its fairly large population of about 3,000 the whole landscape seemed deserted, and most of the work-sites were abandoned. Harijan women walked in groups on their way to collect dung cakes and fill water pots. Children played quietly outside their homes. Only the adults stayed indoors. A tacit understanding between the Jats and Harijans ensured that women and children would not be touched in the caste war. There was, however, an exception: Harijan children were not being allowed to enter one of the village's primary schools.

On February 24, a team of valmiki led by their representative in the panchayat went to the headman and "apologised". They assured him

G. Sharma

of their cooperation and requested to be allowed to work. The headman agreed, but laid down three conditions: one, they would be given wages of Rs 8 per day for the work (as against Rs 10 given earlier), they should bring the animals to the plots at ten in the morning and leave at five in the evening and thirdly, all disputes or complaints should be taken to the headman, and not any district official. Following the assurance, a few valmikis were allowed to join work on the FFW sites.

The tension in the village is obvious. The Harijans complain that the Jats pass unfriendly remarks about their caste when they walk past them on a street. The hostility is sharpening with the attitude of a few wealthy Jats in the village who seem intent on hurting the Harijans. One of them, Arnan, who owns 300 bighas, is planning to start a college exclusively for the Jats, that will not admit Harijans, or so the latter say. "The danger is that we don't have weapons, or strength. We have no choice but to submit to the Jats. We do what the sarpanch tells us. We are 500 against their 1,500", said an angry youth, when this reporter met a group of Harijan leaders in the upper storey room of a dingy mud house. "They have all the land" another said. "They can do what they like with it. But we survive on their land, what happens to us?" he asked.

Most of the Harijans were ready to work with the Jats and others on the FFW programme, purely out of self-interest, but were being prevented from doing so. The Harijans have another explanation for Jat hostility. Since most of them voted for the Janata candidate Balwant Rai Tayal in the recent midterm poll, and the Jats supported the Lok Dal candidate Chandrawati, and both lost, the Jats are taking it out on the Harijans for not having supported their candidate. Bansi Lal was elected, they think, on Harijan support.

According to a "Quick evaluation study of the Food for Work Programme" (August — October, 1979) by the Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission, "it is found that only in five districts (in the country) namely Guntur (Andhra Pradesh), Bhojpur (Bihar), Bhandara and Nasik (Maharashtra) and Burdwan (West Bengal), there is some system of registration of labourers. In the rest of the districts, it is learnt that those who offer work are employed on the various programmes. It was also reported that the Panchayat Samitis at the village level do not find any significant difficulty in getting labourers. There is also no system under which any preference is given to the poorer sections like the landless labourers, small farmers, marginal farmers, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes." The report itself pinpoints Bhiwani district for difficulties in implementing the project, though it does not mention the precise nature of these difficulties. The fact is, they are essentially social, not administrative.

Figures on the FFW scheme relating to the whole of Bhiwani indicate that it is benefiting the wrong people. Of 40 beneficiaries interviewed in the district, six persons were cultivators, six agricultural labourers (the neediest section) and 24 non-agricultural labourers.

Asked to comment on the report's findings about his district, the DC, Bhiwani, Mr Chander Singh took the PEO report in his hands and read it closely. "They have not specified what exactly the difficulties are," he said slowly. "As far as my district is concerned, I think the major problem is that we have less overseers, that is section officers or junior engineers. We have already requested the State Government to help us in this regard. More section officers and engineers are now to be recruited through the PCS examination, the Government has assured us. Since this is a drought affected district the demand for the FFW programme is high—about 6,500 metric tonnes of wheat. The programme has had a good effect on prices. The issue price of wheat has stabilised at Rs 137 per quintal, whereas it used to be as high as 140 to 150 before." Asked about the caste friction, he said: "As soon as we heard about it, we took action. I do not think there is any trouble now. The camels and bullocks have been withdrawn, and so has the fine of Rs 25."

When told that the situation in the village continued to be tense, and could only improve if a senior officer were posted there for some time, Mr Singh disagreed. "That will not help. If caste feelings exist, they cannot be removed by posting officers. In any case, the trouble is over." The fact is, most Harijans were still not working because they were being threatened, overtly and covertly.

Even when the Harijans worked under the scheme, their daily needs were hardly met, they complain. They would be employed only for five or six days in a month, and spend the rest of the time working on the Jats' plots. The quantity of wheat they obtained from a day's work—six kg—was never enough to stock them for the whole month: a Harijan family of four needs roughly four maunds of wheat per month. Even with this, a Harijan family survives on two meals of onion, rotis and pickle every day.

"None of us knows how much wheat is brought from Bawani Khara, the block headquarters. It comes to the sarpanch, and he keeps it where he wants. Now only the Jats are working on the sites. They get all the wheat, while we starve," said an angry Harijan. "Even the moneylenders do not give us any money," he added loudly. The resentment continues, but few of them expect the district officials to take any action. Most of the Harijans have given up the FFW programme for a Jat showpiece and resigned themselves to what they call "our fate".

NIRMAL MITRA, Bhiwani

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LIVING

The seven-day solution

Going abroad? If you're not too sure about where the Sun Temple is, or who Sher Shah was, or when the Carnatic Wars were fought, don't lose any sleep over it. All is not yet lost. If you feel that you will not be able to answer queries on India from your foreign hosts, just take a walk down to the Indian Council of Cultural Research and enrol yourself in the week-long courses it runs for people intending to take a trip across India's borders. "Indians going abroad are quite ignorant about their own culture," Jainail Ahmed Khan told Saumitra Banerjee in Delhi. Khan, who is the programme officer in charge of the course for Indians going abroad, added, "You'd be surprised, but even technocrats, Government servants and academicians are included". The idea behind the course originated from complaints

from various Indian embassies abroad that Indians who travelled outside the country had a remarkably scant knowledge about their own culture. The embassy officials added that this was a constant source of embarrassment in view of the number of queries made by foreigners wanting to know about India. The course being run by the ICCR is expected to give Indians going abroad a basic idea of the fundamentals of Indian culture. The course will touch on classical music, dance and even India's foreign policy, to clear away all the cobwebs. "Some people know that Kathakali is a dance form, but you ask them to elaborate on that and they are lost," said Khan. The course will be conducted by experts in various fields and will include demonstrations, especially of dance forms. In addition, the course will be free of cost. Any takers?

Cat-22




The dead leopard tumbles from the tree

He had grown weary of the forest, so on Sunday, March 2 he decided to go and inspect the world around him. He was a fully-grown leopard whose wandering brought him to the city of Calicut, where he climbed a tall coconut tree to get a better view of his new surroundings. Even while he sat atop the tree a knot of armed policemen and curious

bystanders formed below. Forest officials appeared a well, and tried to bring him down to trap him, but gave up after ten hours of trying, in vain. The police then took over and shot down the big cat. T. Narayanan, the chief photographer of the Malayalam Manorama captured the moment as the leopard tumbled out of the tree dead below.

Eye spy



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Ref. PG-4/156/80

(Private Eye For Social Justice & Security) Date 22nd FEB. 80

Vijay Raj is perhaps the only "private eye for social justice" in Bombay. You wouldn't think so, though. His chamber consists of a tiny room in a chawl outside Bombay's KEM Hospital and two-thirds of the room is cordoned off as his living quarters.

Raj began his career as a self-appointed protector of people's rights with Acharya Atre's "anti-goonda squad". At the time he shared the number two spot with none less than Datta Samant. "We struck terror in the hearts of every goonda in Bombay. You know, all we had to do was put an advertisement in Atre's Maratha, saying that we were protecting a certain festival and there would not even be even a breath of goondism".

All injustice is grist to his

mill. "I have a simple modus operandi. I write letters to the Press and get as much coverage in the local Press as I can. Then I send every letter published to the authorities concerned. It has worked, believe me." He has operated outside the Maharashtra border only once, when he cracked a large textiles racket in Bihar. When he eventually cornered the kingpin and took him to the police, he says, "They offered him a chair while I kept standing : they were so scared of him. But I didn't let them release him, and insisted that they report his arrest in writing. That's the secret of getting these people". One sure indication that his influence is growing steadily is the number of people who come to seek his help.

Gill's will be done

Russian schools do not boast of cricket fields like those at Eton and the English believe, for some strange reason, that all Marxist "failings" spring from this alone. Well, cricket is a game for gentlemen and recently in picturesque Goa, the Press and the Administration agreed to play a friendly cricket match to sort out a mutual problem. Goan newsmen asserted that they had a right to information and could approach anybody connected with the Government, be it a clerk or a gazetted officer. The Lt. Governor, Pratap Singh Gill

disagreed; he said that only the Chief Secretary could be approached for official information. A minor misunderstanding thus cropped up and Gill hit upon the idea of playing a cricket match to sort out the issue. So the two teams, the reporters' eleven and the Lt. Governor's eleven met on the cricket green. The journalists lost but sportingly accepted the Lt. Governor's stand on access to official information. Though they lost the match, the newsmen, we presume, must have gathered sufficient "prohibited" information.

Gold shoulder

It was an ordinary run-of-the-mill day at the construction site. Labourers went about their excavation in the Chienmeirong Hills, Imphal, as they normally did. Suddenly the pickaxe of one of them struck something hard with a clang and some of the others looked curiously in his direction. The pick swung again and the sound was repeated. Convinced that there was something under the earth, the labourers started digging for whatever it was with their hands lest they damage it. Slowly it became

visible. There was no glint of precious stones: it was no ordinary metal image of a god. The labourers looked a little disappointed, but there was more in store for them. In addition to some more metal images there appeared a beautiful golden image weighing about a kilogram. The news spread rapidly and the site was instantly surrounded by crowds from the villages nearby, who claimed collective ownership of the statuette. It was their old village deity, they insisted, which had somehow been misplaced.

Cooking Captain Cook's goose

Was Captain Cook really the first man to wade through the surf that washed the shores of Australia? According to Captain U. Shankar Rao, it is quite likely that he was not. Though it is generally accepted that Cook's men discovered the land that we know today as Down Under, Captain Rao feels that he might really have been beaten to it. The Captain, who is the honorary curator of the National Maritime museum in Bombay, has a theory that Australia was discovered by Tamilians long before 1770, the year when Cook and his men

planted the Union Jack on the soil of the new land. The reason? An Indian wreck was discovered off the coast of New Zealand in 1836. The vessel was the *Mahadibaksh*, while the ship's bell had Tamil inscriptions on it. This bell is currently on display at the Dominican Museum in New Zealand, and a photograph of the bell was displayed at an exhibition which opened in Bombay on March 14. Captain Rao feels that in view of the early maritime activities of the Tamils, it is on the cards that Cook, in fact, was second in line.

Time of his Life

What does Dom Moraes feel about the furore over his book *Bombay*, produced by Time-Life Publications? "I'm frankly surprised at the amount of publicity this book seems to be getting. It's really quite out of proportion to the sort of book it is and the kind of function it is supposed to fulfil." The first copies of the book, the latest in the Time-Life series on great cities, had hardly landed on Indian shores when they were impounded by Indian Customs. The reasons were threefold: firstly there was a photograph of a corpse being taken to a Parsee Tower of Silence; secondly, there was a nude photograph of the deity Parvati; thirdly, Kama-lipura—Bombay's largest red light area—had been written about.

To the charge that, these days it seems to have become traditional for Indians to turn into self-styled expatriates and deliver hyste-

rical tirades against their homeland, Moraes has a very matter-of-fact answer. "You can hardly call many of us Indians in the true sense. Nirad Chaudhry is thoroughly Edwardian in both his writing style and thoughts. Vidya (Naipaul) and I are something like historical accidents."

What does he feel about his book? "*Bombay* is easily the most unsatisfying book I have ever written. There were two editors, who were nice people. But behind them there were ten other editors and ten probe researchers, out of whom only two had ever been to India. They have rewritten almost half the book; this is the first time I have experienced having written a book that wasn't mine. But that is their house style, so one cannot complain." No wonder the title page carries the legend "*Bombay*—by Dom Moraes and the editors of Time-Life books".

The anopheles lives

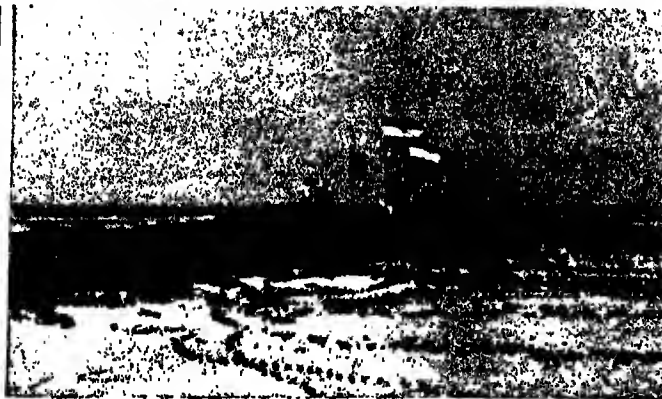
For those who cannot sleep at night because of the irritating hum of an errant mosquito, there is hope yet. Provided you live in Calcutta, though. The Health Ministry has purchased a Rs 5 lakh "fogging" machine in order to eradicate the mosquito

menace in the city. But don't start celebrating yet. That's only the good news. The bad news is that the machine is diesel-powered. And you know what that means: no diesel, no eradication. And plenty of mosquitoes.

Island in the bay—but whose?

There were no eureka for this island, but there should have been. There was quite a flutter in West Bengal when the *Anandabazar Patrika* published a photograph of the island with the Indian tricolour waving in the breeze. The island, called Purbasha, was first noticed by the Naval Hydrographic Survey in 1975 and the Central Government promptly requested the West Bengal Government to claim it, which was done on September 16, 1975. The island, which is situated off the Sunderbans in the Bay of Bengal, is a 17-hour launch journey from Canning.

Border Security Force personnel visited the island in 1977 and erected a plaque on which there was an Indian flag and a map of



India showing the island. And there, apparently, lies the rub, since Bangladesh has also claimed the island as its own. Purbasha, which has a total area of 264 square kilometres is mostly submerged and only about 2 square kilometres are visi-

ble. The West Bengal Government, however, has already gone about planting casuarina trees. As a matter of fact, when State Government officials visited the island recently, the only inhabitant they saw was a crocodile basking in the sun.

Everything in a name

One moment no one had even heard of them, the next they were signing autographs. A new generation of Tamil film directors and stars had arisen, as if overnight. And it seems as if they have it in them, reports Arthur Pais, to make the bigtime. Notwithstanding some of their names, that is. One of them, the son of the late Bhim Singh, is called Lenin. Despite the fact that his maiden film flopped, he wants to continue as a director. There's even someone else called—believe it or not—Socrates, and as if that's not enough, we also have someone who answers to the name of Sai Baba. How long is it going to be before we have a Jesus and a Muhammad Ali?

THE WORLD

Cruel sea



Who would dream of killing a dolphin, the friendliest of sea animals? Not man, surely when history is replete with instances of how dolphins have saved human lives. The dolphin also is an unusual animal in that it has a very large brain and is very intelligent. Science has not found out all it can about this creature whose playful somersaults breaking the sun-kissed expanses of seas around ships bring happiness to the hearts of lonely seamen. A British scientist has given up his job and along with his wife, is tracing a particular dolphin around the world. They

easily recognise each other on chance meetings after hundreds of miles. But fishermen in Japan's Iki Island view the dolphins differently. They say that dolphins eat the fish and deprive them of their livelihood. An American naturalist, Dexter Cate, has fallen foul of Japanese law by releasing 300 dolphins trapped for killing. The World Wildlife Fund has protested. The dolphin is not an endangered species but it is so unusual. And Japan isn't poor India. Its Government surely can do something for the fishermen instead of looking the other way.

Hell-pad

Big businessmen in Dallas, USA are fighting each other, not over big business but a fancy helipad. A millionaire electronics magnate, Mr H. Ross Perot of the Electronic Data Systems Incorporated wants to build a helipad outside his palatial Dallas mansion. His desire: to be flown to office everyday by helicopter. The reasons are purely for personal security, a matter of grave concern. The trouble about his personal safety started about a year ago. Mr Perot, an ex-Marine had sent his own private commando to rescue two of his senior executives from Iran. After the successful rescue the Governor of Texas, inspired by his resourcefulness, appointed him head of a citizens' task force

on drug abuse. The job is dangerous and Mr Perot's friends believe his life is in danger. The narcotics underworld would surely avenge any action by Perot's task force. Perhaps in deference to his friends' wishes, the millionaire applied to the City Plan Commission for permission to build a helipad outside his house. His neighbours, also rich and influential, fear that a single bullet from a gunman might bring Perot and his helicopter down on their beautiful and expensive gardens. So that protested. Perot continues to travel to work by car everyday. The most the millionaire's neighbours can do is offer a word of advice: Travel by an armoured car.

Windfall

On January 24, 1978 Cosmos 954, a Russian nuclear-powered satellite used for maritime surveillance, burnt its way through the earth's atmosphere over Canada's North West Territories. The Canadian authorities started searching for the debris over an area 500 miles by 35 miles and found six beryllium cylinders, 41 beryllium rods and more than 4,000 radioactive particles. Now the Canadian authorities have claimed an astronomical \$

6,026,083.56 from the Russians to cover the cost incurred by Government departments. Though Canadian officials were pleased with the progress of their talks with the Russians, it is not known if they will pay up. Discussions will resume in June failing which the Canadians still have nothing to worry about. Under a 1972 convention there is a provision to take the claim to the United Nations arbitration commission.

Balance of trade



Yelena Bonner

Russian dissident Nobel laureate, Andrei Sakharov, languishes in exile. His wife, Yelena Bonner, continues to raise her voice against continuing oppression by the Soviet Government. And the

Western States, who uphold human rights, keep on playing their games. The non-aligned nations wanted Western States in the UN Human Rights body drop a resolution expressing official concern at the treatment of the Soviet scientist. The Russians in turn withdrew a draft resolution which accused Britain of violating human rights by the "killing of peaceful citizens by British soldiers" in Northern Ireland. When the delegate from Peru said that the goings-on in the UNHRC headquarters in Geneva were "a trade-off between the two super powers" the chief US delegate, Jerome Shestack said: "There was no such trade-off. That is just nonsense. We did not trade-off an Irish resolution for the Sakharov resolution".

Booze won't lose

Prohibition in Scotland? Impossible, yet true. The Scottish village of Findochty had closed down its last pub sometime in the 1920s. The fishermen's wives protested against their husbands imbibing liquor. David Mackenzie, a grocer, revived the controversy when he applied for permission to open a liquor shop. The district council decided to end the controversy and conducted a postal referendum in which over 85 per cent of the electorate voted. The result 463 people wanted their village to be wet, 283—most of them furious housewives—did not

Q.E.D.

The Chinese firmly believe in catching'em young. As soon as a child starts going to school, when he is six-and-a-half years old, arithmetic is one of the subjects taught to them with utmost care. Sums like (720×22) plus (720×34) are Q. E. D. Children are not made into prodigies in primary schools but the teachers put in a lot of hard work, following old-fashioned teaching methods: "chalk, talk and chanting of tables" are pupils' way of learning. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that a large number of kids easily answer complex arithmetical problems in China.

Dying to win

Seen the film *Coma*? If you have, don't be surprised that a hospital in the American gambling city Las Vegas has a nurse who faces charges of actually subtly murdering patients. The reason, aptly enough in Las Vegas, is an astonishing racket in betting over when the patients would die. A nurse alleged to have been involved was being questioned on suspicion that she may have hastened the patients' deaths to win her bets. Several members of the staff of the private Sunrise Hospital have been suspended following the allegations, the hospital's administrator David Brandness said. The inquiry is being jointly conducted by the hospital authorities, police and members of the local prosecutor's staff. The *Las Vegas Review* in a copyrighted story quoted reliable sources to say that six people had died in the process, including a nursing supervisor in the hospital's Intensive Care Unit. The allegations are that life-supporting equipment in the unit which has ten beds were tampered with. The money for the bets was contained in an envelope kept for the winner.

Mishing Misha



Stanford Blum and Misha

Stanford Blum was a great friend of Misha, the mascot for the 1980 Moscow Games. He was a happy man till only a few days ago when his Image Factories Sports Incorporated, Los Angeles, USA owned the production and selling rights on all products including Misha to promote the Games. Now

Misha is in limbo following the Olympic dispute. Prior to the "boycott or not to boycott" crisis, Misha was one of the hottest selling items. Now the boom is over. Thanks to President Jimmy Carter who asked American companies on March 13 to stop exporting items for the Games which include souve-

nirs, drinks, etc. US companies will thereby lose 15 to 20 million dollars. Prior to this, the ban on the export of goods was voluntary. Now Mr. Carter has asked his Commerce Department secretary, Philip Kultznick, to encourage American companies to honour the voluntary product ban.

Check-foes



This chess grandmaster story reeks of hate. Tigran Petrosian and Victor Korchnoi grew up hating each other and they still cannot hide it. On March 7, a day before the candidates tournament opened in Velden, Austria, Korchnoi, who defected from the Soviet Union, said he was meeting Petrosian "with great displeasure". He confessed he liked to play

chess "but not against Petrosian". And the organisers have been adding fuel to the fire. Said organiser Franz Hoelzl: "We have done everything to avoid problems". In their overenthusiasm a wooden board was put under the chess table so that the toes of the two Grandmasters did not touch. Identical rooms were also built to avoid discrimination.

Loophole in the law

Hijacking trains is a favourite sport in Yugoslavia. The men behind it are, of all people, shepherds. In the northern parts of the country there are no pastures for sheep to graze on. Every winter sheep are driven down from the mountains to the plains. The shepherds carry rifles. Recently, a group of shepherds held up a goods train and forced the engine driver at gunpoint to take their sheep to some

place near Zagreb. Such no madic pasturing is against Yugoslavian law. A Government officer stopped a group of errant shepherds to explain the law against such pasturing. And lo! The shepherds took the paper they were shown, stuck it on a tree trunk, fired a bullet through it, and told the officer: "Your law is hollow. There is a hole right through it". This should dispel myths that shepherds are harmless.

Striking lessons

"How to disrupt your school in six easy lessons" was the name of a course which nearly 100 students aged between 12 and 18 underwent. The two-day course started on March 8 in a Polytechnic in central London. It imparted the rudiments of revolution, socialism and the efficacy of terrorism. The

course was organised by the youth body of the left-wing Socialist Workers Party, Red Rebel, as part of a programme of the National Union of School Students (NUSU). NUSU chairman, Hardy Desai is advising students on how to organise strikes and undermine teachers' authority.

Beginning March 30

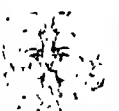
This week the Sun is in Pisces, Venus is in Taurus, Jupiter, Rahu and Mars are conjoined in Leo, Saturn is in Virgo, Uranus and Neptune are in Scorpio, Mercury and Kethu are in Aquarius and the Moon will be moving through Virgo, Libra and Scorpio from Leo.



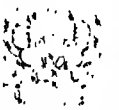
ARIES (March 21 — April 20) Your financial position will improve rapidly. There is a chance of a promotion. A secret matter will progress. Adopt novel and original ideas in business. Such schemes will bear fruit. But document and correspondence need minute perusal. Give importance to domestic issues which will bring you happiness. A week for merry-making. **Good dates:** 31, 1, 2, 3 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 8 and 4. **Favourable direction:** North.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) This week will be marked by unexpected events that will benefit you. Financial expansion is predicted. Attend to business, peruse correspondence carefully and avoid litigation. You are moving success. Your relatives and friends will praise your efforts. Medical expenditure is likely. Somebody in your family may fall sick. You will undertake a short journey. **Good dates:** 30, 2, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** South.



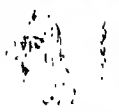
Gemini (May 22 — June 21) Despite some trouble, perhaps involving property, inheritance or legal matters, a successful and happy week is forecast for you. Intense activity and sound health are predicted. Family problems will be difficult to solve. An elderly relative may give you cause for worry. Think before you act. **Good dates:** 2, 3 and 4. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 10 and 3. **Favourable direction:** North.



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) Minor gains through an elderly female relative is likely. Nevertheless, some anxiety and even loss through misplaced documents or wrong statements involving litigation is indicated. Pleasure in the domestic world is indicated. Learn to keep your temper under control. Meet high officials if necessary. You are very close to your goal. **Good dates:** 31, 2, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 7, 4 and 9. **Favourable directions:** East and South.



LEO (July 23 — August 22) This week is a most auspicious one. Take reasonable risks and forge ahead on all fronts. A happy romance or "event" is indicated. Some people will win lotteries. Speculation will surely pay. Do not displease those in authority. Your business and financial affairs will prosper and a promotion is far from improbable. Travel and push business to the utmost. Watch your health. **Good dates:** 30, 31, 1 and 4. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.



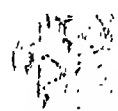
VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) A very lucky week is predicted for you. Your business affairs will prosper and you will make huge profits on old stocks. A timely hunch will lead to immense gains. Some people will win prizes. A promotion is probable, especially for those in services. A splendid opportunity will come your way. Exploit it. Watch the health of womenfolk in the family. **Good dates:** 1, 2, 3 and 4. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 5 and 8. **Favourable direction:** West.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) Apart from some opposition by an elderly business partner or associate, your prospects are excellent. After a minor setback your professional and financial affairs will continue their prosperous run against a background of domestic bliss. Change of place and travel are probable for the professioned people. Love and marriage are predicted. **Good dates:** 2, 3, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 9, 7 and 4. **Favourable direction:** North-west.



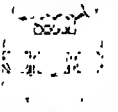
SCORPIO (October 23 — November 21) Your prospects are reasonably good, but take care not to endanger your position by antagonising your employer or those in authority. Co-operation of a relative will prove very useful. Attempts to deceive you are probable. Nevertheless, your courage and enterprise will bring you a fair measure of success. Do not depend on family friends. **Good dates:** 31, 1 and 2. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 5. **Favourable directions:** West and South.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) You are advised to conserve your resources and consolidate your recent gains. This week your outlook is pretty good, mainly for business and financial affairs. Partners and spouses will play an exceptionally big part in your career — some will bring gain, others loss. Apart from the possibility of a sharp reversal of fortune, your outlook is most auspicious. **Good dates:** 3, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 6. **Favourable direction:** North.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) A sudden turn of fortune's wheel will remove past gloom, respects excellent. Women in general will advance your interests and befriend. There may be opposition on the part of an old person from among your family. Keep away from gambling. Promotion is on the cards for many people. Take steps to settle all your problems. **Good dates:** 30, 1, 2, 4 and 5. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 7 and 4. **Favourable direction:** North-west.

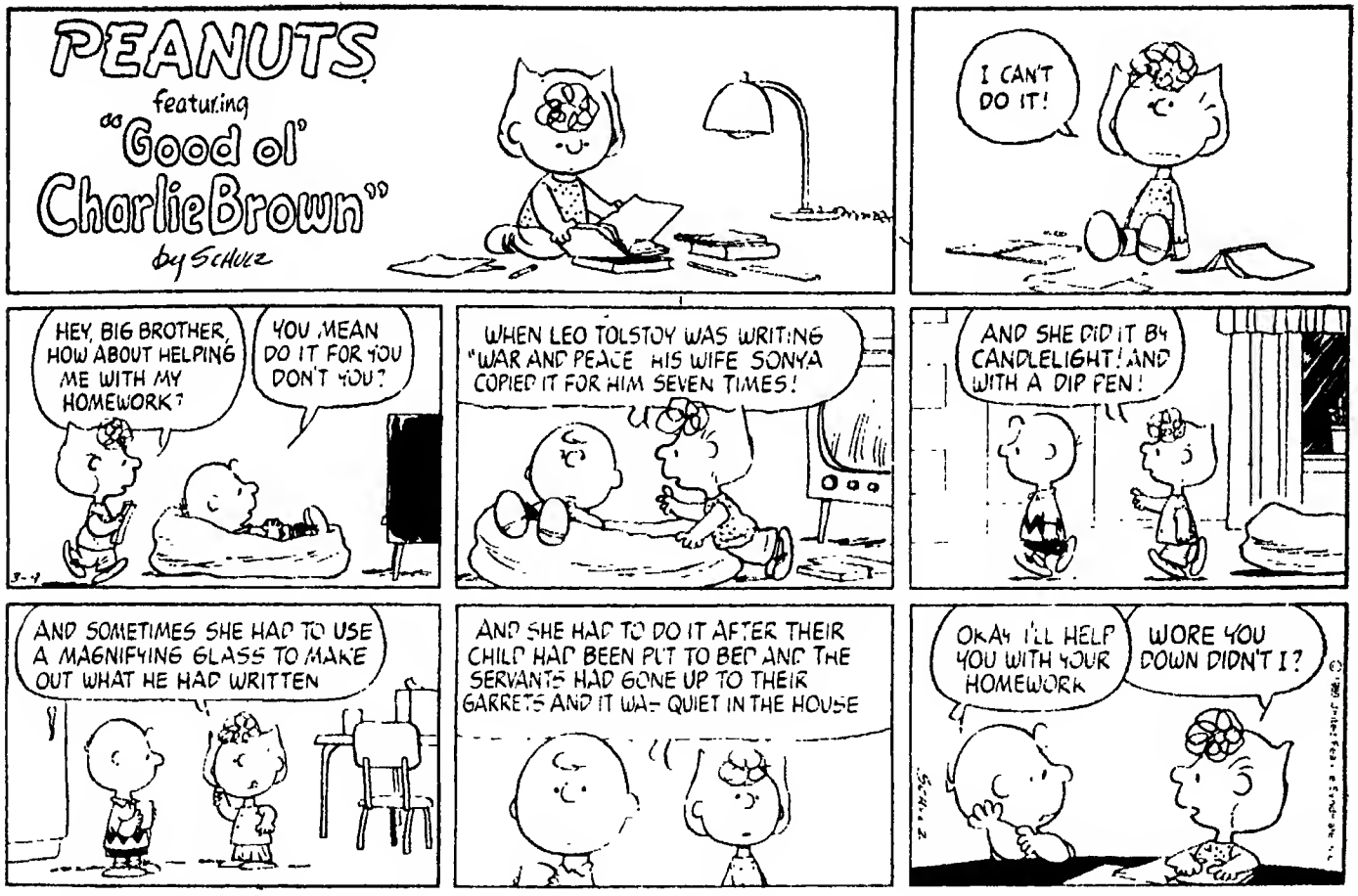


AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) On the business front things will move smoothly. Social activities will keep you busy. You are advised to conserve your resources and maintain good relations with your employer. You will make large profits. Attempts to deceive you are probable. Nevertheless, your courage and enterprise will bring you a fair measure of success. Court matters should be postponed. **Good dates:** 31. **Lucky numbers:** 1. **Favourable direction:** West.



PISCES (February 20 — March 20) This will be a week of mixed fortunes. Exercise care in vocational affairs. See to it that you do not displease your employer or superior in office. After a minor setback, your ventures and financial affairs will continue to prosper. Many will win promotions through timely hunches. **Good dates:** 1, 2 and 3. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 9. **Favourable directions:** East and South.

M. B. RAMAN



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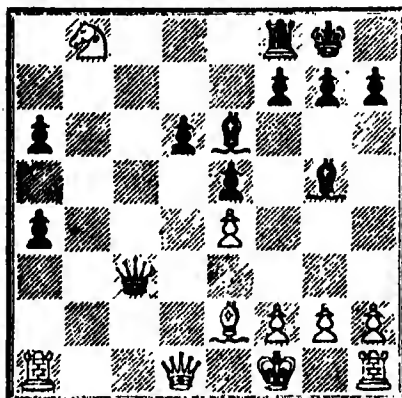
**Beauty in your bathroom
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OBM 5036

chess

Borik (Black)



Nunn (White) to move

Position after Black's 19th move

Accurate calculation

THE INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT held in Dortmund last spring proved to be yet another success for our most recent grandmaster John Nunn. John took third place with a score of 7½ out of 11, a point behind Georgadze (Soviet Union), the tournament winner, but one and a half points clear of the rest of the field which included Tony Miles. Admittedly, Dortmund was not one of Tony's better tournaments, but this can in no way detract from the merit of John's performance which, in conjunction with his consistently good play throughout the past year, must firmly establish him among the top three players in the country.

John's strength lies undoubtedly in his ability to calculate concrete variations with both depth and accuracy, and this makes him a very dangerous opponent when on the attack. But, as the following game shows, his accurate calculation can also be of great help to him in defence. Faced with a speculative but very dangerous rook sacrifice, John finds the right move at every turn and finally consolidates with his extra material.

White Nunn Black Borik (W. Germany) Dortmund 1979. Sicilian Defence, Sveshnikov Variation.

1. P-K4, P-QB4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. P-Q4, P x P; 4. N x P, N-KB3; 5. N-QB3, P-K4; 6. N(4)-N5, P-Q3; 7. B-N5, P-QR3; 8. N-R3, P-N4; 9. N-Q5 John has been playing the piece sacrifice 9 B x N, P x B, 10 N-Q5 P-B4, 11 B x P1? P x B, 12 N x P with success recently, but no doubt his opponent knew this and was well prepared to meet it.

9... B-K2; 10. B x N, B x B; 11. P-QB3, B-N4; 12. N-B2, R-QN1; Anticipating the thrust P-QR4, but still I prefer the simple 12... O-O.

13. P-QR4, P x P; 14. N(2)-N4! An important finesse. Now White has prospects of winning back both QRP's.

14... N x N; 15. N x N, O-O! Black is virtually committed to this sacrifice, as he would otherwise lose his queenside pawns without compensation, eg. 15... Q-N3, 16. Q x R+ B-Q2, 17. Q x P.

16... B-B6, Q-N3; 17. N x R, Q x N! The only consistent follow-up. Now White must be careful.

18. B-K2! Not 18. B-Q3? Q x P; 19. K-K2, B-N5+ 20. P-B3, R x N, 21. P x B, R-N7+ 22. K-B1, R-Q7, and Black has a winning attack.

19... Q x P+ 19. K-B1, B-K3, (DIAGRAM)

48

20. P-KR4! A winning move. On 20... N x P Black still has excellent counterplay with 20... B-N6; 21. O-N1, B-B7; 22. O-R2, B-N6, and if 23. Q-R3, R-QB1; threatening B-B8! 20... B-R3; Now 20... B-N6 would be met by 21. R-KR3! 21. N x R P, P-R6; Still 21... B-N6 is met by 22. R-KR3! 22. P-N3, P-R7; 23. K-N2 With his king now secure White can easily exploit his extra rook. 23... B-Q7; 24. O-R4, Q-N7; 25. N-B7, B-N6; 26. Q-N5, B-B6; 27. B-B4! B-Q5; 28. KR-KB1; Resigns. Black has run out of ammunition. It 28... B x B; 29. Q x B, B x BP then simply 30. R x R P.

Removal of the linchpin

White. Adorjan. Black. Portisch. Hungarian Championship, 1976 Sicilian Defence.

1. P-K4, P-QB4; 2. N-KB3, P-Q3; 3. P-Q4, P x P, 4. N x P, N-KB3; 5. N-QB3, P-QR3; 6. B-K2, P-K4, 7. N-N3, B-K2, 8. O-O, B-K3; 9. P-B4, Q-B2; 10. P-QR4, QN-Q2; 11. K-R1, O-O, 12. B-K3, P x P; 13. R x P, N-K4, 14. N-Q4, QR-Q1, 15. N-B5, B x N; 16. R x B, Q-B1, 17. O-KB1, Q-K3, 18. R-Q1, R-B1, 19. B-Q4, B-Q1, 20. P-R3, R-B3; 21. B x N, P x B; 22. R-Q5, N x P. White resigns.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

THIS DEAL from the match between Israel and France in Lausanne was a worthy candidate for the Bola Brillancy Prize.

Dealer, West. Game all			
♠ Q J 5			
♥ A K 2			
♦ A 8 5			
♣ A K 10 5			
♠ K 8 7 6 4	N	♠ 10 9 3 2	
♥ 9 5 4 3	W	♥ J 8 7 6	
♦ 10 9	E	♦ K J	
♣ Q 6	S	♣ 9 8 7	
♠ A			
♥ Q 10			
♦ Q 7 6 4 3 2			
♣ J 4 3 2			

The French played in 3NT, but the Israeli pair bid to Six Diamonds as follows:

SOUTH	NORTH
Shofet	Fryd- rich
3♦	2NT
4NT	5♦
5♦	5NT
6♦	Np

So far as I know, 4NT was Blackwood and the response indicated three Aces. West led ♦ 10.

The obvious play is to let the opponents win their trump trick, then try to drop the Queen of clubs in two rounds, with the ruffing finesse in spades as a second chance. If this comes off, one club can be discarded on the third heart and one on ♠ 2.

Shofet followed a stronger line. He went up with ♦ A, cashed ♦ A and took three rounds of hearts, discarding a club. He ruffed a spade, crossed to ♠ A, and ruffed dummy's last spade. Then he led a low diamond from hand, trusting the trumps to be 2-2. When East won the trick with ♦ K he had no good return.

The inference concerning the trump suit was reasonably safe, because West was unlikely to have led a bare 10 of diamonds. Such a lead is too likely to solve a problem for a declarer who may hold, for example,

K J x x x opposite A x x

The declarer was unlucky, I feel, in the sense that any straightforward line of play—even the simple finesse in clubs—also wins the contract. Had the cards been differently divided, East holding ♠ Q x x, South's play might have made a bigger impression on the jury.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



THE ATTRACTIVE portrait of the Baoulé girl on this 10-centimes stamp from the Ivory Coast is typical of the designs chosen for French colonial issues during the 1930s. There were well over a thousand different stamps for the 24 colonies and because their face value was so low (a French centime was then worth only about one-fiftieth of a penny), the stamps could easily be included in cheap packets, so that they must have tempted many youngsters into becoming philatelists. The Ivory Coast series comprised 41 stamps, ranging from 1-centime to 20-francs, in four designs.



A PIECE of drill-weave tapestry similar to British sampler-work is featured on 4-kronor stamps recently added to the Swedish definitive series. Popular during the 18th and early 19th centuries, particularly as wall-hangings in Swedish farmhouses, the tapestries were large and elaborate, so that they were often included in the trousseaux of well-to-do farmers' daughters. The example on the stamp is from a tapestry woven in the southern province of Scania about 1860 and measuring about 9 metres by 2. Like most modern Swedish issues, the new stamps are intended for sale from rolls, not sheets, and so are perforate only on two edges.

C. W. HILL

his india

prizes 30 for the entry given first

without comment



MORADABAD: A Rampur citizen applied for two litres of kerosene to set his house ablaze and got the permit to do so. Mr Gian Singh narrated his story while talking to reporters on the malfunctioning of District Supply office, Rampur. He said he applied for the permit and the DSO, without reading the application, sanctioned it and the clerk prepared the permit. He said he had done so when the DSO had told him that he could get the kerosene not as fuel but for setting his house ablaze — *Northern India Patrika* (Ajai Mehrotra, Allahabad)

DELHI: The moderation committee of the department of commerce of Delhi university "moderated" the marks of candidates with the result that the daughter of a member of the committee became the topper. This case generated much heat when it was discussed for over two hours at a meeting of the academic council. What surprised and angered the council members was the fact that the topper in the M.Phil course of the commerce department, daughter of a reader of the department and member of the moderation committee, ended with more than 100 per cent marks. Apparently the marks were given in terms of points and the highest number which could be given was seven, but the moderation committee in its over-zealousness gave her more than seven points — *The Sunday Statesman* (A. Balaram, New Delhi)

dia abroad

NEW DELHI: Soviet troops have brought their drinking habits to Afghanistan but found that the Muslim country has few liquor shops and fewer bars. Six burly Russian soldiers found a solution by knocking on the door of an Indian businessman's Kabul apartment and demanding refreshment with the help of their weapons, reported a foreign resident on his arrival at Delhi airport on February 29. Mr A. C. Rikhie, local finance

HALEM: A man named Sasanka Sekhar Chakravarty, a vendor without licence of Biswanath Charali, was found selling so-called "Oxygen tablets" in a local market here at Rs 1.50 each prior to the day of solar eclipse. This was detected by Dr R. Das of Kauripathar state dispensary. He was handed over to the local police. The man was arrested and sent for trial according to police — *Assam Tribune* (Bubul Kumar Mahanta, Jorhat)

JAIPUR: A 62-year-old Rajput woman, Mrs Sona Kanwar, performed "Sati" on the funeral pyre of her husband on February 29 last at village Neemdi Kotharia in Nagpur district, according to a report. Mother of seven, the woman sat on the pyre taking the dead body of her husband Sugan Singh on her lap and lit the fire herself, repeating the age old Rajput tradition of "Sati" in presence of hundreds of villagers. Police got the information only after everything was over. According to the report, people from distant villages are pouring in at the place, where she performed "Sati" — *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (Kajal Kumar Chakrabarty, Calcutta)

BANGALORE: A 15-year-old boy has been arrested by the city police for allegedly attempting to rape a 29-year-old housewife, his next door neighbour. Police said the boy, a high school drop-out entered the woman's house on March 5 disguising himself with a false beard, goggles and hand gloves. When the woman opened the door the boy allegedly told her that her husband had been admitted to a city hospital following an accident and he had gone there to escort her to the hospital. When the suspecting housewife, closely questioned him the boy asked for a glass of water and then followed her to the kitchen and attempted to rape her, police added. Her scream brought in a neighbour who overpowered the boy. The boy had allegedly threatened the man with a kitchen knife. During the scuffle the false beard gave away and the woman was shocked to find he was none other than the next door boy, police said — *Indian Express* (Chandra Manoharan, Ootacamund)

manager of a West German drug firm, was so shaken he had no choice but to invite them in. The soldiers put down their assault rifles and quaffed beer, whiskey and cheese until 6.30 the next morning. A senior Indian diplomat, Mr H. K. Malhotra, was informed of Mr Rikhie's predicament during the night. Mr Malhotra called the Afghan police for help but was told no one was available to deal with the Russians — *The Times of India*

WHY should not Mr Charan Singh resign for the sake of unity... am in no way less important than Charan Singh — Raj Narain

SO WHAT? What difference has Mr Ram's exit made to the Party? — Krishan Kant when asked if the Janata would split again

THERE is no indication in the interim budget of reversing the policies which were followed by earlier Congress, Janata and Lok Dal Governments and which made the rich richer and poor poorer — Chitta Basu, Forward Block MP in the Lok Sabha

WE believe in spelling out what we mean; we don't hesitate in telling the people the facts — C. M. Stephen on the interim budget

THE average age for a politician to stay near Mrs Gandhi varies from one to two years while bureaucrats have lasted for more than ten years — *Onlooker*

THE ruling Party has no occupation at all except to hover around the Prime Minister... If Assam cannot be won over, can West Bengal be toppled or Kerala tampered? — Nikhil Chakravarty in *Mainstream*

BAHUGUNA did his bit the way many other Congress (I) leaders did to harness the Indira Gandhi wave — Mohammad Yunus

WE don't care if they like us or not. We intend to be respected throughout the world — Ronald Reagan

I DON'T know how to interpret India's reaction to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. All I can say is that you have a very long spoon to eat porridge with the devil — John Myrdal quoted in *Debonair*

KISSING on the screen, even if projected naturally, cannot be taken as natural by Indian audiences, particularly Bengali ones — Sumitra Mukherjee, upcoming Bengali actress

IF I don't go to watch the matches, I will never get to see him — Kavita about her husband, Gundappa Vishwanath

FOR the first time, this supposedly left-wing magazine had an editor who had never been to a public school, who did not have a university degree and who actually trained as an editor — Bruce Page, quoted in *Newsweek*, on his appointment in 1978 as editor of *New Statesman*

WHEREVER CAN BABUJI GO ?

BABU Jagjivan Ram has kept everyone guessing ever since he quit the Janata Party. Will he join the Congress (I) ? Or will he work for a broad-based forum of Congressmen opposed to Mrs Gandhi ? It is learnt that Mrs Gandhi, without giving any positive commitments to Babuji, has indicated by certain actions that there is room for reconciliation between the two leaders. The Prime Minister's stand on the Jaguar deal (she said in the Lok Sabha that there was no question of an enquiry) is being taken by many as a concession to Babuji in a bid to win him over. After all, one of the most scathing attacks on the Jaguar deal was mounted by Maneka Gandhi's *Surya* apart from, of course, the irrepressible and highly innovative Mr Rai Narain.

But sources close to Babuji doubt whether he would join the ruling Party. Differences between him and Mrs Gandhi may be sorted out, but younger elements in the Party are unlikely to forget the past, they point out. According to some sources, Babuji may not at all join the Congress (I). He may instead try to bring his former CFD followers closer to the Congress (U) and wait for possible dissensions in the ruling Party to strengthen his forum of Congressmen. But such a plan appears impractical. Observers in Delhi however feel that when there is smoke, the possibilities of a fire cannot be immediately ruled out. For all we know, the ruling Party may be toying with the idea of offering the deputy-chairmanship of the Planning Commission to Babuji. This post is of Cabinet-rank. And the added advantage, from Mrs Gandhi's point of view, could be that Babuji would have to resign his Parliamentary seat. But there is a snag ; it is said that Babuji may not be happy with deputy-chairmanship and may like to hold the post of chairman, which is normally held by the PM. Observers recall that before the elections Babuji had missed the Congress(I) bus by demanding much more than what the Party could offer.

Babuji had reportedly wanted the Party to ensure that he would be made the PM and that Mrs Gandhi would not contest the polls. Now too, observers feel, he is aiming too high.



Madhu Dandavate

UNPERSONED

HAS the Railway Board forgotten its Janata Minister ? It seems so. Pressmen were astonished to find during a meeting with the Railway Minister, Kamalapati Tripathi, that while portraits of all Railway Ministers since 1947 were displayed on the walls of the conference room, Madhu Dandavate's portrait was conspicuously missing. When this was pointed out to the officials, they promised to make amends. But the question is whether it was a mistake or a deliberate omission.

SCOOT !

HOW should the Union Ministers set an example before the nation on saving petrol ? By travelling in buses and scooters of course. This suggestion was made by one Cabinet Minister, who is known for his passion for police escorts, at the pre-budget meeting of the Union Cabinet. Needless to say, this suggestion was greeted by frowns rather than amusement.

SOMETIME IN DELHI

HOW has the Congress (U) leadership reacted to the reported move of bringing Babuji into the Party, in case he does not join the Congress (I) ? The reaction is mixed. There is a big question mark about the possibility of Babuji carrying on his anti-Mrs Gandhi line for too long. One move is to make him the president of AICC(U) in place of Devaraj Urs. Another is to create a post of chairman of the Congress (U) Parliamentary Party, thereby ensuring that Urs's presidentship and Y. B. Chavan's post as the leader of the CPP (U) are not affected. But the move to make him the Party president has irked some leaders. Karan Singh was heard telling some leaders of the Congress (U) at the Congress (U) Party headquarters at 3, Raisina Road the other day: "Why should we keep on borrowing presidents ? Are there no dynamic leaders within the Party ?" The reference was obviously to Devaraj Urs having become the Party chief after he crossed over from the Congress (I). Meanwhile, the functioning of the AICC(U) office has become such that a lot of Party-men are in agreement with Dr Karan Singh's letter to Urs that either the AICC(U) office be shifted to Bangalore or the president should shift his moorings to Delhi.

PRESS IGNORED

A TYPICAL example of the couldn't care-less attitude of the Government towards the Press was witnessed recently. The budgets of 10 state Governments were presented to Parliament but no copies were made available to the Press. The Press Information Bureau which usually distributes such documents to reporters jocularly remarked that journalists could go to each "embassy or high commission" of the state Governments in Delhi and collect the copies themselves. The problem could have been easily resolved by giving the reporters a bunch of only 10 sheets of paper. The budget division of the Union Finance Ministry had beautifully summed up the main features of each state's budget on one sheet. But then nobody wanted to do this simple job.

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

The crumbled walls sing ballads of glory.

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An echo in the mountains

Kangra Fort. Surrounded on three sides by steep cliffs, overlooking two rivers. A stronghold of the Katoch Rajas from pre-historic times, this fort lured many a conqueror. From Mahmud Gazni, Hindu Rajas, Jehangir, the British and finally the Sikhs. From Kangra, Pathankot and the Kashmir Valley are easily accessible.

Citadels of valour

Chittorgarh. The citadel of Rajput valour resounds with legends of bravery and sacrifice. Tales of Suttees end Jwahr. The palace of heroic Padmini. The shrine of the poetess Mirabai.

Lohagarh. North-west of Bharatpur stands this impregnable fortress with unique defences.



Seventy-six bastions of victory

Golconda. Built by the Raja of Warangal, it passed on to the Bahmani kings and on to the Qutab Sehi regime. It finally fell to Aurangzeb after a 10 year siege. The fort is on the outskirts of the city of Hyderabad.

A sultan's pride

Srirangapatna. Built in the 13th century, this fort was scene for the last battle of Tipu Sultan. Built on a river island, the fort is washed on both sides, by the river Kaveri. Colourful frescoes on battered walls, recreate historic battle scenes.

In the time of Buddha

Rajgir. This fort built by Ajatasatru, a contemporary of Buddha, is the country's oldest extant fort. The ruined fortifications of the ancient capital of Magadh can be seen here.

Heir to the sun

Rohtasgarh. Built by the son of the legendary Raja Harish Chandra, who is reputed to have descended from the sun. In 1857, it was a rallying base for freedom fighters.

Silent songs of splendour

Mandu. Stronghold of the 10th century Raja Bhoj. Scene for the eternal love story of Baz Bahadur and the Hindu singer Roonmati.

Pratapgarrh. Shivaji's stronghold for many years, it was the scene of his fateful encounter with the Bijapur general Afzal Khan.

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SUNDAY



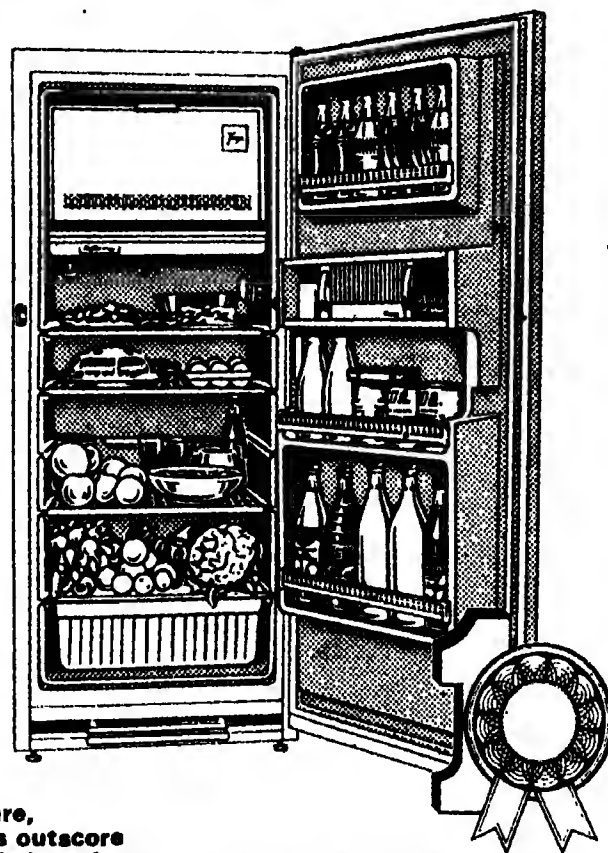
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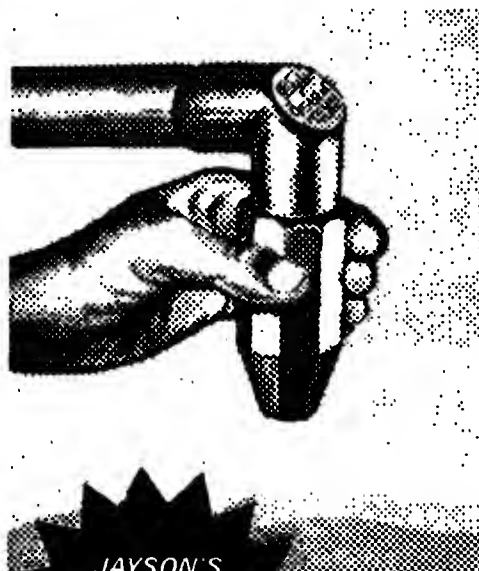
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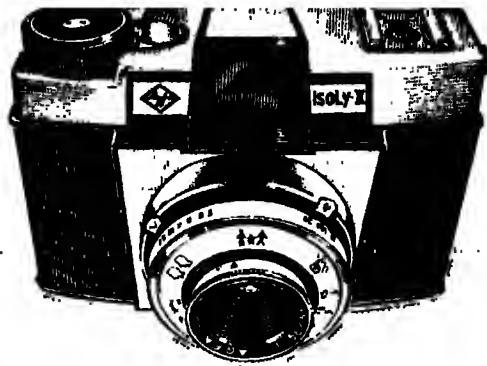


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Chitrajit Ghosh



Gambling seems to be taking the entire country by storm. It has got out of race courses and traditional dens right into the lives of ordinary people. Are we becoming a nation of compulsive gamblers to whom whether it will rain or whether the next ball will fetch a boundary is all grist to the stupendous gambling mill?

CNS



M. M. Kaye was born in India and carried its nostalgia with her wherever she went. So that when she turned novelist, India was, of course, her canvas. On a recent visit she reminisced on the genteel world in which she was brought up, where also persisted the romance of grand campaigns to which her soldier-father constantly went off.

One of the most formidable and colourful duos in Indian politics has come to a parting of ways. Charan Singh and Raj Narain have fallen out. This puts the opposition into further disarray at a time when they can least afford it. What new alignments are in the offing?



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Cover transparency of Charan Singh by Raghu Rai, of Raj Narain by Devi Prasad Sinha and photographs of gambling by Chitrajit Ghosh.

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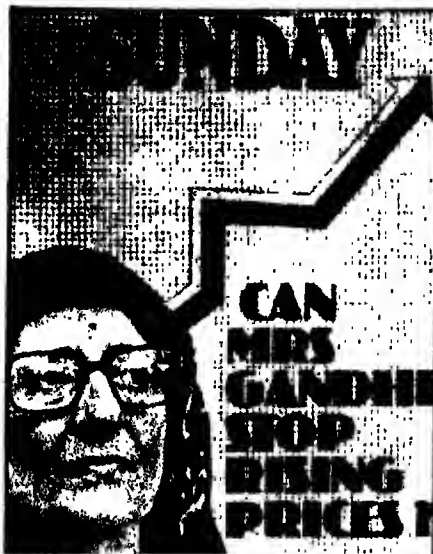
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SYNDICATE BANK



Price of capitalism

WE ARE happy that Kewal Varma in his analysis of rising prices ("Can Mrs Gandhi stop rising prices?" March 3) showed the guts to call a spade a spade. The author exposed the myth of the Prime Minister's "magic touch" in curing a vast country like ours of all economic ills. While celebrated economists like Friedman have blamed inflation on the capitalist system, politicians in India continue to fool the masses

with absurd explanations.
Pinaki Chakraborty, Calcutta

MR VARMA has touched the very core of the problem. He rightly said that inflation is inherent in capitalist economies, and since Mrs Gandhi is not out to end capitalism, prices will continue to rise. While the entire capitalist world reels under the weight of inflation, the socialist countries—USSR, Vietnam, Cuba, Poland, East Germany, North Korea and others—are free from the scourge. The only way to stop price rise is to end the capitalist class rule. But since this can never be achieved by bourgeois political Parties like the Congress (I), Congress (U), Lok Dal and Janata, the only hope lies in the Left. Unfortunately, even the Left Parties are in league with the bourgeoisie.
D. Das, Ranchi

TO MY mind Mrs Gandhi has weathered the economic storm steadfastly. But whether she has succeeded or not will depend on the extent to which the common man's lot has improved as a result of her measures. Mrs Gandhi's resounding electoral success has placed on her a heavy responsibility to initiate measures of social reform. It is in her own interest to check the price rise.
Vinod Sujan, Delhi

KEWAL VARMA's article was superb. The price rise has made life miserable for the masses. Mrs Gandhi alone cannot be expected to stop it unless the trading and business com-

munities do not support the Government's steps. The Preventive Detention Act should be enforced and erring traders should be severely punished. Unless the Government succeeds in controlling prices, the ruling Party's prospects in the coming state elections might seriously suffer.
Kameshwar Prasad Singh, Ranchi

THE question is not whether Indira will be able to lower prices but why she could not control prices. As an able administrator and powerful ruler, Mrs Gandhi has the capacity and guts to tackle a situation of rising prices. The past proves this. A country with such a great population and low production is a challenge to any Government.
Abdul Aziz, Cuttack

ONE should not be disillusioned with Mrs Gandhi so soon and criticise her for not pulling off miracles. Of course she won a majority in the last elections owing to a vigorous campaign against inflation. But this does not mean she can repair the damage the Janata and caretaker Governments did to the economy for over 33 months, in two months. One should not forget that she inherited a sinking economy, aggravated by a staggering Rs 1000-crore deficit. Moreover, warnings do not work with our traders. I feel another Emergency would provide happy relief to many, though Mrs Gandhi should not revert to authoritarian trends.
R. V. S. Ramesh, Nagpur

Act now

"THE night Pipra became a graveyard" (March 3) by S. P. Sagar was shocking. When will casteism end? The incidents at Belchi, Parasbigna, Dohiya and Pipra prove that atrocities on harijans have become a way of life, that the law is non-existent and the administration has collapsed. It is for this reason that the harijans and other weaker sections have lost faith in the administration and are arming themselves. The Pipra killings show the failure of our Constitution to protect the interests of the poor and downtrodden. Neither the Central nor state governments can protect the poor unless they can maintain law and order and provide economic stability.
Arun Sarkar, Jorhat

THE atrocities, as you earlier stated, were the result of both a class and a caste war. Naturally, these are human problems that must be dealt with in a humane manner. But who will tackle them? The administration and the police have both failed to protect the lives of innocent citizens, while politicians exploit them for their own ends. The causes of carnage must be investigated.
Om Prakash Misra, Shahjahanpur

AS EXPECTED, you came out with another bold, detailed and investigative report. Hardly does a day pass without attacks on harijans, who form about 23 per cent of the country's population and are the poorest of the poor. The Pipra incident should be an eye-opener to the Government, since it was the result of a prolonged land dispute between the harijans and uppercastes. The Government should make arrangements for the speedy disposal of all pending land disputes to avoid similar incidents in future.
Koteker Revansidda, Gulbarga

ON EACH occasion in Pipra, Parasbigna and Dohiya, the reason for the atrocities was a land dispute between antagonistic castes. The Government should set up land tribunals to dispose of all such disputes, and strengthen the law and order machinery in sensitive areas.
Beamgi Shivasharnappa, Bidar (Karnataka)

WHY Pipra and Parashbigna? All over India, caste violence is almost a daily routine. The present state of affairs is an outcome of three decades of misrule, and wrong planning. Even now it is not too late to give the problem serious thought.
Swaswathi Ghosh, Barabur

Groom to doom

CONGRATULATIONS to the Rev Kuruvilla Gandy ("My son doesn't like school anymore", March 2) for raising an issue of grave concern to all parents. I would like to add another frustrating observation: not only are tender young bodies and minds put to great strain by crushing examinations, but there is also a morbid obsession in schools with "rank in class". What is worse, most parents approve of and encourage this obsession. Furthermore, the examination system in my own daughter's school is such that everything, from answers to essays, must be reproduced word for word in order to fetch marks. For instance, when my daughter defined a valley as "the low-lying land between mountains" she was penalised for not writing "the landstrip between two hill slopes" which was the answer dictated in class. No amount of persuasion would convince the teachers that the two statements were one and the same.

Children are psychologically retarded by laborious exams and obsession with rank; in the process, all their imagination, initiative, and creativity are ruthlessly destroyed. It is high time parents protested against

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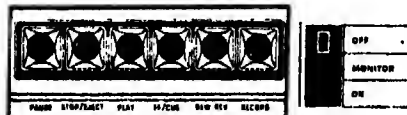
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the system of education and examinations.

Lakshmi Krishnan, Bhilai

I FULLY endorse the Rev Chandy's views on education, particularly at the pre-primary stage in India today. Having been associated actively with this field of education for the last 20 years, I have watched with growing distress and alarm the deterioration and near-collapse of the system of primary education. Ideally, the nursery should be a place where the child is made aware of his environment and taught through experience how to adjust with it. He adapts himself to strangers, and gains confidence in himself. The teacher is meant to be a caretaker, and a very subtle guide. At no stage must her personality be imposed on that of the child, for the period between three and five years of age is the most formative in a child's life. The child must be allowed to express himself fully, both physically and mentally. It is a time for many "dos" and very few "don'ts". At the end of his pre-primary years he is ready for the discipline of a classroom. To provide ideal conditions for development, what is needed is adequate staff,

space and carefully planned equipment.

Most nursery schools in Calcutta however, hampered as they are by the need to prepare children for the admission test, syllabus and rules of a regular school, hardly fulfil these requirements. They are cramped, ill-equipped and understaffed, and often burden the child with letters and numbers that leave no room for any other kind of development. Surely at this stage a child can be provided a little more than ABC and 123 in three different languages? Not enough attention is paid to a child's pre-primary years. Since you have taken the cue, I would request you to conduct a survey of nursery schools in Calcutta.

Jayanti Gupta, Calcutta.

THE Rev Chandy rightly pointed out: "The primary interest in bringing education to the illiterate, the down-trodden and the oppressed has been given up. The child of uneducated parents, who can neither help him with his homework nor afford him private tuitions is bound to fail in this system." I fully endorse this view.

T. S. P. Rao, Patna

Eighties' Sanjay

BARUN SENGUPTA's article "Sanjay wins another round" (March 2) shows how it was possible for Mrs Gandhi to dissolve non-Congress (I) governments in nine states. Her son has become a vital factor behind her decisions, and she must be able rely on him. Mrs Gandhi should, however, be cautious in accepting whatever he says: Sanjay has still not attained political maturity. He needs experience, and Mrs Gandhi has the responsibility of building him up the right way. We look forward to a good and intelligent Sanjay in the Eighties, different from the brash young man we saw in the Seventies.

Prahlad Ghosh and Shirsanka, Calcutta

Conquer he will

THIS refers to the last item in "Khaas Baat" on page 51 (March 2) about the former Tamil Nadu CM, MGR. The item appears to stray away from the truth. Plousji may believe, and steadfastly too, that the odds are very much against the veteran politician-actor in case he is planning to return to films. Knowing MGR's fan following, one should think the author is wrong. MGR with his enormous charisma should conquer with ease.

C. V. Aravind, Madras

Other way round

YOUR issue of March 2 carrying my review of *The Boat People* by Bruce Grant badly mixed up the credits of Mr Grant and that of Mr Michael Richardson. My original typescript read: "While Grant is author, diplomat, international affairs writer and High Commissioner in India (1973-76), Michael Richardson, the Age's South-East Asian correspondent..." The process of editing has unfortunately transposed all the credits of Grant to Richardson.

Anil Grover, Calcutta

Apologies

Two errors inadvertently crept into Kewal Varma's cover story, "The withering away of the Janata" (SUNDAY, March 16). Line 13 of the first para on page 11 should read: "The Swatantra which had been unashamedly pro-capitalist and pro-princes..." instead of "...pro priories..." The second sentence of the second para on page 11 should read: "The 1974 and 1975 upsurge against Mrs Gandhi in Bihar and Gujarat also had an element of backlash of feudal and semi-feudal forces resulting from the signals given to temper with the system." This portion was wrongly printed "...backlash against feudal and semi-feudal forces resulting..." The errors are regretted. —Editor

Mod god

PRITISH NANDY's "Sex and the sizzling sanyasi" (February 24) is an eye-opener to all those sanctimonious saints who could never think about sex without feeling guilty. Bhagwan Rajneesh has rediscovered the virginal wasteland of sex in its myriad possibilities. Nandy, in a style which is both rare and chaste, has expounded the Bhagwan's philosophy of sex and salvation with excruciating care and concern. The Bhagwan embodies all the best in oriental and occidental thoughts, which reach their acme in his tantalising personality; he is a product of Western permissiveness and Eastern mysticism. It is really a great pity that most people, blinded as they are by scientific rationalism and ultra-empiricism, fail to see that he and his devotees are the only sane persons in this schizophrenic world. There will not be another man like him in centuries.

It is strange that Mr Nandy, though he is one of the few who understand the Bhagwan too well, appears to be sceptical about his claim of a prolonged orgasm. I, for one, have attained the unspeakable bliss of a half-hour-long orgasm by mastering the breathing technique.

Only the Bhagwan can save our civilisation, which is on the brink of extinction. This is the reason why the wise men of the West flock around him in search of an elusive nirvana.

Ravi Anand, Muzaffarpur.

HAS anyone else in India dealt with sex as candidly as Pritish Nandy has in SUNDAY? But the fact that the author has never set foot inside the ashram is very, very obvious—and we



hope he comes here to see things for himself. If a 12-year-old series of talks—not writings, but talks—has impressed him so much, imagine what the proof of the pudding—life in the ashram—will do!

Swami Krishna Prem, Press office, Shree Rajnesh Ashram, Pune.

WHAT is the hullabaloo all about? Is the Acharya cutting into the poet's fan following? Both have a sizable band of admirers. And both sell the same package, exquisitely wrapped: sex, sex, and sex. The Acharya more philosophically, the poet more lyrically.

Ramesh Saxena, Bombay.

SUNDAY deserves to be congratulated for having a writer of Pritish Nandy's calibre. I thoroughly loved reading his witty, frivolous, naughty scribble: jet-set journalism for the bored. Alas, although I've been living and working here at the ashram in Bhagwan's presence for some years, I didn't recognize the Bhagwan he is chatting about. But, of course, by reading one single book of the Bhagwan one is hardly qualified to comment on the phenomenon of an enlightened being. Mr Nandy should have courage and come to this loving (not sexy) haven, hang around for a while and come in touch with an enlightened Master.

Ma. Anand Bhagwati, Pune

IN Panaji they avoid Xanu Moddov—Xanu the dhobi — like the plague. Of the 50,000 population, an estimated 1,000 form the base of hardcore gamblers who quake at the very mention of his name. As in the case of most other legendary figures, few people have ever seen Xanu Moddov and fewer still know whether he is still alive, or in fact, if he ever existed. But in the typical logic of Panaji, if you lose your shirt in a gambling session, the most plausible explanation is that you crossed the path of the enigmatic Xanu Moddov, wherever he may be.

Once, gamblers recall, there lived a Goan from Pomburpa called Foxie. No gamblers' school ever allowed him to shuffle, or for that matter, even touch a pack of cards. Foxie may not have been a card sharper, but it certainly seemed as if he could memorise the order of cards in a pack. Foxie graduated — and this is history — to the Cricket Club of India in Bombay where, once again, the shuffling embargo was prompt-

ly plugged on him. Nonetheless, he still made a packet, and a pretty comfortable one at that.

There was a priest too, a Father Fernandes, who has since passed away. The good Father, who for some unknown reason, used to be known as "the Copro", was a gambling addict. At early morning mass he would play solo rummy, the right hand pocket against the left hand pocket, with the main pack secreted in the breast pocket of his cassock. And the discards? They would be cast away under the morning's epistle.

Perhaps it is the insularity of their environment that compels the Goans to gamble. In Panaji alone there are over a dozen gambling dens, where mostly flush and runny are played. But Goan rummy is different from the version played by the rest of the world. There is none of the old-fashioned two compulsory runs and two sets. At some gambling schools in Goa, three trios and a quadro; or 13 unconnected cards of ten points value each; or a 13-card run of unmatched suits (known in local circles as a *Pandu bhab run*); or five pairs

This article has been written on the basis of reports filed by MARIO CABRAL eSA from Panaji, ASHOK KAMATH from Madras, OLGA TELLIS from Bombay, NIRMAL MITRA and SAUMITRA BANERJEE from New Delhi and TIRTHANKAR GHOSH, DAVID McMAHON and S. N. M. ABDI in Calcutta.

THE GAMBLING BOOM

It has the whole country in its grip

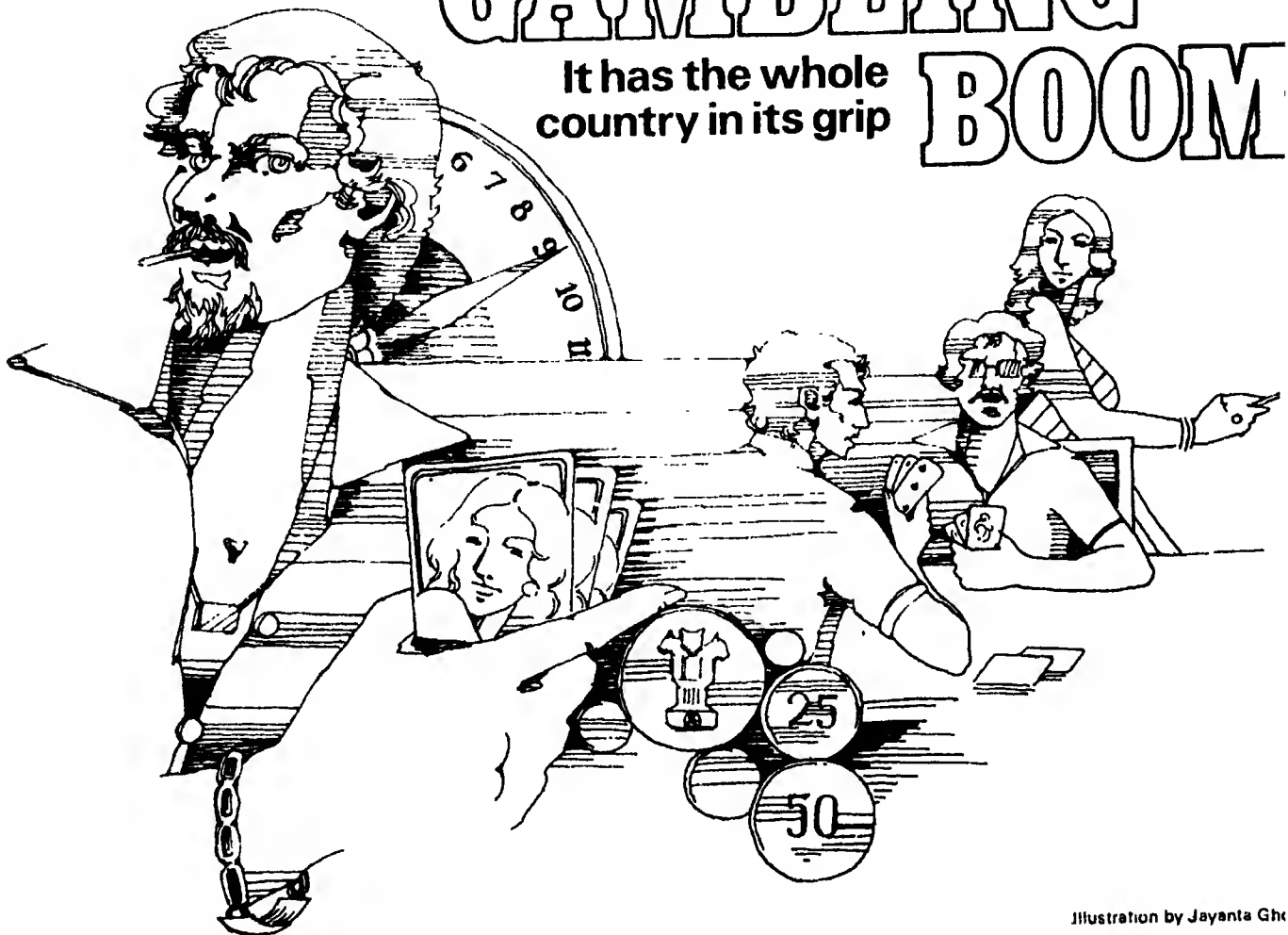


Illustration by Jayanta Ghose

of cards are some of the many unorthodox ways of declaring "rummy".

For high stakes, there is nothing like a game at the Port Trust Institute in the port town of Vasco da Gama, where Rs five a point is considered nothing unusual. For lower stakes and seedier surroundings, witness Pedido, which comes from the Portuguese word meaning request. In the main, it is a two-man game. One player holds the pack, while the other tries to guess the correct value—the suit notwithstanding—of the cards that are about to be dealt. The right to win the deal depends on how many cards he is able to predict correctly. Surrounding the two players, as if in a bullfight, sit scores of others, making side bets on the outcome. Everyone sits on a huge bamboo mat spread on a cowdung-plastered floor. It is the done thing in these dens to swear (the cruder the better since this is reckoned to bring good luck) and to spit gobs of spitkin on the bug-infested walls. At one particular place, on the outskirts of Panaji, the gamblers go in with large, empty jute bags and the winner often takes home upwards of Rs 30,000. For sheer excitement, however, there can be nothing else to rival the game of Gadgadda, the onomatopoeic name for a game of dice which are rolled in empty cigarette tins. The dice are loaded, more often than not, but that is beside the point. There is no village mela without its clandestine Gadgadda stall.

Gamblers in Goa use a variety of talismans. Attending a funeral is sure to bring the money rolling in, and there are other good luck charms as well. In the municipal garden outside Club Vasco da Gama, Panaji's Las Vegas, it is not uncommon to see one or two middle-aged men whiling away their time under the trees whose branches bow beneath the weight of hundreds of crows. Not for nothing do they sit there; they hope to collect on their bad pates a spattering of what is locally considered a most effective talisman: crow's droppings. A sparrow's, while welcome, would be a poor compromise. Pregnant women and widows must be avoided at all costs as they are the worst possible portents, while the only known remedy for a persistent run of bad luck is to sleep with a *bhangan*, or sweep cress.

At one stage, Goa's contribution to the famous Ratan Khatri's Matka empire was about Rs. five lakhs a day or, to be more precise, a night. In at least one case, the Post and Telegraph repeater station was used to convey bets to out-station bookies and later to relay the winning numbers to local bookmakers, one of whom was the town's Mayor. The game is on the decline now but is still very much in evidence. Five years ago an Inspector of Police who was being questioned for "possession of assets beyond his known means of income", got away scot free because he ascribed his wealth to Matka winnings.

Most gambling "dens" in Goa are middle class homes with husbands

looking after the till. There are a few clubs as well — two in Panaji, three in Margao and one in Vasco da Gama. Most dens have their own unlicensed bars, where drinks are cheap and the wholesome snacks are generally prepared by the sweaty lady-of-the-house. At most of these, it is an unwritten convention that a heavy loser be shown some sympathy, which could be in the form of credit or acceptance, in good faith, of cheques which in all likelihood will bounce. When that does happen, the gambler in question is warned with all civility — and in all sincerity — that his reputation is at stake and his credit in jeopardy. After three or four such defaults, the player in question is generally sent to Coventry and his reputation takes a severe beating, leaving him no scope for a discreet change of resi-



Satta numbers stuck on a public park railing in Calcutta

dence. Once blacklisted, you are finished as a gambler, for you will be avoided like the plague. There have never been murders over gambling debts in Goa and even in the rare lights over gambling accounts, words and not lists are used freely.

Goa is perhaps the only place in India where a well-known bank got itself — albeit unwittingly — involved with gamblers. An understanding manager is reputed to have granted overdrafts to his gambling partners to help them tide over their problems. One of these worthies, who had been on the verge of bankruptcy, rose to the position of the richest gambler in Goa. His profits paid for a rice mill and real estate besides a fat bank balance and also enabled him to buy back his family

heirlooms, which he had pawned during his run of bad luck.

An Excise official was not so lucky. He used to fund his high-stake rummy games by selling, on the quiet, "duty paid" seals to owners of bonded warehouses. His ploy was discovered and he was warned by his understanding superiors (who were keen rummy players themselves) and banished to an Excise station near the ghats where gamblers can afford no more than five paise a point and where there are no bonded warehouses.

Gambling in Goa is as widespread during the monsoon months as it is civilised. So civilised in fact, that at one stage local Government peons would go around every morning to the city clubs and gambling dens to collect the "sick notes" and casual leave applications of officers who had been at it for two or three nights in a row and who showed no inclination to return to work.

TILL the early Seventies, the most popular and well organised form of gambling in the city of Madras was *Parithi Soddattam* which literally means cotton gambling, the Tamilian cousin of Bombay's Matka. The opening and closing prices of the New York cotton market are the terms of reference and the last digit of both these variables has to be predicted. Thus if the opening price on the New York cotton market is 87.35 dollars and the closing price is 87.43 dollars, anyone who has placed his money on the number 53 has obviously raked in the shakels, since the last digit of both prices has to be correctly predicted. For sheer organisation, cotton gambling in Madras probably matched the Matka kingdom in Bombay. Bets were purely a gentleman's agreement between organisers and the punters. The agents, ostensibly ordinary-looking citizens, would hang around street corners, railway stations, cinema halls, parks and other such public places. A small chit of paper containing the number would change hands and punters' fingers would be crossed till the following day. And, needless to say, money would change hands as clandestinely as the bets.

The *parithi* gambling outfits were reputedly flushed out by F. V. Arul, Inspector General of Police, who is credited with having busted the outfit within a fortnight of taking over as IGP. In fact, Mr Arul is said to have hit the bestseller list with a publication on how he cleaned up the city by eradicating the *parithi* menace. Today this form of gambling is still alive in a few isolated areas but is certainly a far cry from the booming trade it was in its halcyon days. So keep your eyes skinned: the next time you see a chalked combination of numbers on a Madras wall, you will know precisely what "two and six" or "four and eight" means.

Rural Tamil Nadu has its own forms of gambling. A rather macabre version is the widely-patronised

kozhi sandai, known to the rest of the world as cockfighting. Two full-grown, bellicose cocks with gilt-edged knives tied to their legs, are pitted against one another. The birds are trained for combat and are reared on a diet which includes systematic doses of raw meat, goat's blood and, in some instances, arrack to inculcate the killer instinct. Wagers

are made on the fighters by their respective owners as well as anyone else who feels inclined to do so. The moment the birds are released by their owners the fight begins. The gory spectacle of nashing blades, ruffled feathers and spattered blood continues until one of the fighters is pecked, scratched and hacked to death. Sometimes such a fight

becomes a prestige issue between one village and another and the stakes very often run into hundreds of rupees, on a winner-take-all basis, although side bets are another matter altogether. This form of sport has actually been banned in Tamil Nadu, but its appeal has in no way diminished even though each of these fighting birds costs about Rs 80. The apocryphal story behind the origin of this variety of bird is that the common fowl is strapped in a provocative stance to a tree that houses an eagle's nest and that the prizefighting bird is the progeny of such a union.

Long before 1958, when the Indian Penal Code declared it a game of skill and not one of chance, rummy has been the staple diet of most gamblers in Tamil Nadu. Legal provisions still do not permit involvement of money in the game but anyone who knows the feel of the game will tell you that it is the money at stake which has made proselytes out of non-players. For the average housewife in Madras, rummy helps drive away boredom; for the office-goer on a train, it is an excellent way to kill time until one's destination. The losing rummy player, with the age-old philosophy of inveterate gamblers, believes that his next wager is not only going to wipe out his earlier losses but will leave him with something more in addition.

Rummy is popular at most of the city's exclusive clubs, where colourful tokens representing hard cash help salvage pricked consciences. Actually the tokens are paid for in advance and are "cashed" at the end of a game. About four years ago, one of the more ritzy clubs in Madras was raided by the police and though there was no *prima facie* evidence, the club's cashier turned prosecution witness and produced the register containing details of the tokens issued. The court took appropriate action and some big names in the city were booked under Section 12 of the Madras Gaming Act.

The game of marbles ranks second in popularity next only to cards. Normally a child's pastime, it sometimes takes the form of regular gambling among the economically weaker sections of society. Some of the better-known varieties of the game are *songu*, *pattarai* and *adkijaan*. The kitty for *songu* normally consists of multiples of 25 paise and each apex of a triangle forms one such kitty. A player has to try and hit the marble of the player to his left and if he succeeds he goes on to try the next opponent, moving clockwise. Each successful attempt to hit another marble has to be followed by "potting" one's own marble in a small hole within the triangle, so such a game can, in theory, continue for hours and the winner can take home a small fortune, albeit in coins.

In suburban areas it is not uncommon to see youngsters sitting on busy culverts and betting on the registration numbers of passing vehicles. Numbers from one to nine are bet on, and the last two digits of the next vehicle are taken into considera-

Dial M for Matka

MATKA'S darkest days were those during the Emergency, when this particular form of gambling was subdued. Many a Matka kingpin languished behind bars following a crackdown on their activities, while the smaller fry were wary about replacing them. It was only when the Janata came to power in 1977 that the racketeers emerged once more and Matka flourished as of old.

The system itself is simple. People bet on certain numbers and at specified times of the day, Matka operators hold a draw at which three cards are picked. As soon as the draw is over, telephones start buzzing and bookies far and wide are informed of the winning number. There are no less than about five or six draws every day in the normal form of Matka, which has several different versions. The most popular form is *kalyan*, which is run by a person named Kalyanji who operates along with his sons from a place near Worli Market. Kalyanji, a former *karyana* or provision merchant, was the one who evolved the system but he was later elbowed out by the Ratan Khatri gang and had to be content with only the afternoon draw.

When this incident took place, it was mainly the night draw that was heavily patronised, attracting high-denomination bets and bringing in an enormous amount of money for the operators. Thus Ratan Khatri, along with his financiers, thought it worthwhile to remove Kalyanji from his own domain and take over command of operations, lock, stock and barrel. It is alleged that the Khatri brigade employed a great deal of money, influence and muscle power to dislodge Kalyanji and render him ineffective. The takeover had its repercussions in gang wars and a bloody aftermath. Khatri brought in sweeping changes in the style of operations to become an innovator of sorts and like many operators, all he did was supervise the draw, while he never accepted bets himself.

At around 12.30 in the afternoon, there is plenty of activity at Kalyanji's headquarters. Inside one of the rooms in the precincts of his private empire, a pack of

cards is shuffled continuously and finally spread face down on a table. Three or four of his men sit in the room, evoking an aura of security and confidence. Outside, in the backyard where bets are accepted by Kalyanji's men, members of the public are selected and taken upstairs in a private lift to the room with the cards and are asked to choose one card each. People who have been fortunate enough to witness this scene report that the whole pack is actually marked, with the result that the third and final card becomes all-important.

Five minutes before the draw, telephone lines buzz urgently. Bookmakers use this time to reveal whether there have been unusually high bets on certain numbers, for it is not at all uncommon that heavy bets will be placed on a particular number. It is here that the fraud lies, for it often happens that such numbers invariably fail to turn up. A lot of money changes hands over *kalyan*, but Ratan Khatri's organisation corners even higher bets. There are a host of other operators in addition to these two, but they are not so famous. In the Fort area there are people like Hansraj, Bhiwanji, along with other big-timers like Lakhur, Matungawalla, Manek and Ramesh. Modi Street, Bazargate Street, Cowasji Patel Street, Gogha Street and the famous Maruti Lane are the main centres in the Fort area.

One unique offshoot of the Matka empire is the predictions that are made with regard to the lucky numbers for the day. Astrologers and numerologists—genuine or otherwise—are busy throughout the day, using their special powers to forecast the winning numbers. The market is flooded with reams of one-page handouts containing guidelines on how to hit the bullseye. There are no guarantees made but that does not prevent the bets from being placed. Interestingly enough, Matka is a favourite pastime with the lower classes of society, who seek to augment their salaries with a windfall through the numbers game.

V. VENUGOPAL

tion and added in progression. For instance, if the last two digits are nine and eight, these two added give 17. One and seven added give eight, so the person who has bet his money on this number, takes all the money in the kitty. The process is endless and the game only comes to a halt by mutual agreement on the part of all participants.

And finally, for the godfearing gambler there is always the legalised form of punting through lottery tickets. There are certain regulars, claim lottery ticket agents, who never fail to invest their money in the hope of a windfall, some of whom have been at it for years. For them, hitting the lottery jackpot is the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Someone once worked out that if he bought a lottery ticket every week of his life, the law of probability stated that he would be 330 years old before he eventually won the state lottery. But, like so many others, he buys his tickets regularly, hoping to beat the law of probability at its own game.

WHETHER residents of Bombay are gamblers by nature or compulsion it is difficult to say, but the ranks of hardened gamblers are growing by leaps and bounds, making a mockery out of the state of Maharashtra's Gambling Act. In fact, it sometimes becomes difficult to believe that such an Act exists, under which 21,176 people were prosecuted in 1979, a further 36,524 arrested and Rs. 31,07,027 seized.

Gambling dens aplenty dot the length and breadth of Bombay city, most of which masquerade as respectable clubs. Today, there are roughly 463 such institutions in the city, of which the most exclusive is said to be an opera house. It is inaccessible to the common man and to date, has never once been raided. Exquisitely furnished and decorated, the place is said to resemble a club in a multi-million dollar movie. People flock here all the way from Surat and Ahmedabad and there are facilities for overnight stays. All money bags are deposited in front of a gold-plated Ganesh. In addition to these 463 clubs there are 100 official clubs like the Willingdon Club where society ladies in lace saris and diamond earrings gamble away for hours on end. Then there is the Cricket Club of India, which is often referred to as the Card Club of India; albeit tongue-in-cheek of course. The suburbs boast of more such social clubs than the city proper but Ghatkopar holds the record. It is a crowded residential area and includes one of the longest housing colonies like Garodianagar. It is really the industrial workers and labourers who patronise the clubs after office hours, perhaps in an effort to supplement their meagre wages.

Ghatkopar is closely followed by Khar and Santa Cruz, but nearby Pali Hill—the abode of film stars—and Carter Road in Bandra have the most exclusive gambling dens where lakhs



of rupees change hands every night. Two film stars are also known to patronise these places and recently, income tax authorities raided two such clubs owned by a father-and-son combine. At most of these clubs one is allowed to play rummy which is considered a game of skill but flush—which is illegal and arguably a mug's game—is proving more popular. Stakes range from 25 paise a point to Rs two, while the owner takes "table money" to the tune of about Rs. five per hand. In return, the patrons are provided with food, refreshments and cold drinks. Hard liquor is also served as it helps gamblers to part company with inhibitions that would otherwise cramp stake money. International rummy has a considerable number of devotees, with six people to a table. What very often happens is that the owners arrange to have their own men joining a table unknown to the other gamblers, with the result that the historic swindle of the Pandavas is

repeated with variations every night.

At some of the bigger clubs, where patrons gamble away thousands of rupees every night, they are permitted facilities for credit in case they are short of ready money. In others, the owners give gamblers Rs. 20 each as they leave for home, presumably to pay for their taxi hire if they have lost all their cash. Still other clubs offer a jackpot as an added incentive to gamblers. This means that if a person wins four successive games, he is entitled to Rs. 500.

Owners of gambling dens in Bombay need not worry about their future as the money is rolling in and shows no signs whatever of abating. Some have invested their gains in real estate while others have started restaurants, hotels and bhel puri shops. In fact, one owner who is also a liquor trader, owns a string of Matka joints, while a former municipal corporation member is the owner of a chain of clubs in Colaba.



GAMBLING in Delhi is a way of life; in railway stations, bus terminals, hotels, private apartments, in fact, any open space will serve the purpose. A few months ago newspapers in the capital reported the aftermath of a gambling session. Two middle-aged men, both industrialists, were involved in a scuffle and one of them had brandished a lethal weapon. Their names were not disclosed for fear of their prestige being affected.

What is true of these industrialists is also true about several others. One particular group of ten men whose collective identity is a closely-guarded secret but most of whom occupy fairly important positions in various professions, shift their gambling venue after each game in order to avoid detection. Initially they used to frequent a hotel in Central Delhi but have now abandoned it and prefer to play in their own houses. In another unique case, the son of a head priest of one of Delhi's well-known temples, conducts his gambling sessions in a room that is actually a part of the temple premises. All games involve a close circle of select friends and often involve quite a bit of money. Doors and windows are tightly secured and outsiders, unless they are trusted, are never allowed to look on.

Card games are the most popular form of gambling among the upper classes, while *jhuggi* dwellers favour dice games or *satta* (the local name for Matka). It is quite common to see porters engrossed in dice games at the Interstate bus terminus at Kashmir Gate. Four of them sit in a

circle and each of them calls a number while one person rolls the dice. Whoever calls right takes the money that is in the kitty. This pastime has a fairly large following at railway yards at the New Delhi and Old Delhi railway stations. Government clerks, too spend their lunch breaks playing cards under the trees. As the stakes get higher, the crowds get bigger and the proceedings get increasingly raucous. One of the lunchtime gamblers explained "We play to help pass the time and with a bit of money thrown in, the game becomes more interesting".

Drunkenness and violence in this city seem to go hand-in-hand with gambling rackets, while liquor adds to the general amusement over fluctuating fortunes. Police sources admit that gambling disputes have sometimes led to murders, but regulars claim that the trouble is generally caused by overzealous strangers. In the more organised rackets, however, such untoward behaviour is pre-empted by an unwritten code of ethics and in some cases, by policing arrangements. Another form of gambling which is attracting a large following these days is betting on the outcome of Test matches: there were fairly high stakes involved in the India-Pakistan Test in Delhi, though the game ultimately ended in a draw. Cricket betting also has its lighter forms. Some diehards will even place bets to see which umpire reaches the middle first, on resumption of play. And then there is "instant betting" too, for which odds are agreed on, following which a person has to nominate the precise ball in an over off which a boundary will be hit.

Gambling in public places is illegal

according to Section 12 of the 1935 Gambling Act, while gambling inside a house, if it does not involve payment of any commission to the house-owner (locally referred to as *naal*) is not a cognisable offence. It is also laid down that policemen raiding gambling premises must do so with a proper warrant, issued by an officer not below the rank of a Superintendent of Police. And the law, according to a police officer, considers any game with an element of chance and which involves money, a form of gambling.

THERE is a tailor in Calcutta. His work is not exceptional, but it does not bother him in the least. It does not matter a whit if he is not given any work for weeks, for he is quite content to live on his winnings at the race course. When he has a bad weekend, he starts his rounds in order to get a few more customers, but when his luck is in, the same customers do not set eyes on him for weeks. Then if an outsider comes in to upset his calculations, he miraculously reappears with clothes that are long overdue. A regular customer has grown accustomed to his antics: "If I do not give him any work, my conscience suffers, yet at the same time if I do give him some work, I know very well I will not see him again before the New Year". Some of his customers are fellow gamblers who follow the form of the horses, and they, naturally, are his favourites. The evening preceding a big race he will show up at their homes with a smile on his face and a race book in his hand. Their discussion over, he will depart, only to return again when his luck runs out.

There is a delightful story about an ex-MLA from Park Circus. A good, pious Muslim, he would say his *Id* prayers at the Park Circus maidan and was used to his evening walk in the same place. One evening he was intrigued to see a group of young men sitting in a circle, their shoulders hunched, concentrating at something on the grass in front of them. A friend informed him that the young men were, in fact, gambling but the MLA dismissed the theory with a smile. His friend insisted, explaining that they were gazing at a 50 paise coin since a great deal of money depended on whether a fly sat on the coin in the next five minutes or not.

Gambling in Calcutta acquires many forms. They seem to be endless, but the main forms are *satta*, rain gambling, punting at the race course, cards, mahjong (a game played with dice) and tape gambling. The latter involves a length of cotton tape with a loop at the end. The tape is rolled up and prospective gamblers have to pay a rupee before they are allowed to put a pencil into the tightly rolled tape. The tape is then unravelled and if the loop is caught in the end of the pencil, a specified amount of money changes hands. Mahjong,



Beauty and
softness
come together
to wake up
your home

Binny furnishings fabrics

Bright & beautiful

'Kalamkari'

Soft and

Soft

And

furnishings. In soft

cotton.

Colourful. Colourful

from Binny. Put them

together and watch any

room come to life.

BINNY

a Chinese speciality, thrived in the Fifties in the Chinatown locality. It is still well patronised, but is now played mostly at Tangra, an area which comes under the jurisdiction of the Tiljala police station.

The affluent have their own clubs, most of which are registered bodies. According to one compulsive gambler, such clubs have great utility value. They keep away nagging wives and brawling children and at the same time, keep the men in money. And, as he himself adds, sometimes out of it as well. However, this is not a punishable offence since it does not bother the police as satta or matka does.

Gambling laws and statutes in the state of West Bengal are loaded heavily in favour of gamblers and sentences are light in those cases that are

virtually ineffective. One does hear occasional reports of arrests and seizures, but these yield very little in the form of money. A senior police official spoke of raids he conducted with the teams under his command. Though these raids were organised simultaneously, the seizures amounted to only a few hundred rupees. The only people caught were bookies, petty agents and "runners," while the overlords remained free. This is particularly true of the Matka kings.

Satta, which accounts for Rs seven lakhs every day in Calcutta and its neighbourhood, received a temporary setback in August 1978, when five top operators were arrested. Among them were Abid Mirza, Tabrak and Sitaram Saraf, the kingpins of Bowbazar, Chandni Chowk and Burrabazar respectively. According to the

Competitions Act was amended in 1978 and stricter measures were introduced. Both the fine and the period of imprisonment have been increased in different categories. The number of arrests have also increased and the amount of cash seized also shows an upward trend. The Detective Department of the Calcutta Police has pressed more men to check gambling after the amendment of the original Act of 1957, but the kingpins remain elusive. In the words of Mr Prasun Mukherjee, Deputy Commissioner, Detective Department of the Calcutta Police, who heads the anti-rowdy section: "The gambling law as it stands today, requires the presence of three factors simultaneously, for the successful prosecution of a gambler. The gambler, the gambling money and the documents or material exhibits to prove the act of gambling. The modus operandi of 'organised gambling' in Calcutta today is such that we find it extremely difficult to make all these factors coincide. We may arrest smaller fries with small amounts and money, but seldom the central collection money with the necessary documents and rarely with the main men behind it all." In spite of all these constraints the Calcutta Police have done creditable work over the years. In one raid alone, on October 1, 1979 a posse of 35 officers with seven vehicles raided two gambling dens in South Calcutta. Although these were raids on private houses where only innocent card games were in progress, the mastermind of the satta racket was caught. Altogether 28 people were arrested, among whom were Yasin and Sukumar Roy, alias Tina. A record amount of Rs 108,773.46 was seized.

According to the Calcutta Police, gambling in the metropolis of Calcutta is a "deeply entrenched form of crime". And there are plenty of instances to prove this statement. One Deputy Commissioner of Police was intrigued by a well-known form, called "rain gambling". This involves wagers being made to see whether it will rain on a certain day, between specified hours. One group of people was caught red-handed, at this activity and put into the police lockup without any ado, and the Deputy Commissioner announced that he would like to see the gamblers. He strode across to their cell, only to witness a strange sight. The "prisoners" were throwing a shoe into the air and shouting with anticipation as it landed. For a moment the DC was baffled and asked the constable guarding them what was going on. "They are gambling, sir," explained the constable, and so they were, placing bets on which way the shoe would land. The agitated DC walked away and ordered the release of the men about an hour or so later, since there was not sufficient evidence for prosecution. The ringleader, slightly chastened, but very grateful, entered the DC's office. "Dhanyabad, sahib," he said, "I am richer by Rs 10,000 as I had bet that we would be released before sunset".

Photographs by Chitranil Ghosh



not acquitted. The police face a Herculean task in proving gambling offences before the court since they have to apprehend the gamblers along with gambling equipment and the money involved. Besides, the work of the police is hampered by the fact that most gambling dens in the city possess excellent intelligence networks, so a police raid is generally learnt of well in advance. It often happens that the police posse arrives on the scene, only to discover that all incriminating evidence has been well concealed. Another important point is that the kingpins elude arrest with the greatest of ease. Of the three acknowledged satta kings operating within the city of Calcutta, Yasin, Akbar and Abid Mirza, two have spent very short stints in police custody although it is alleged that their dealings involve lakhs of rupees. In addition, the connivance of policemen at almost all levels reduces gambling risks and contributes to the continuing prosperity of the organisers.

Limited police personnel and the infrequency of such raids make them

Calcutta Police, the success was shortlived since a number of politicians set about to secure Saraf's release. In private conversation, policemen concede that gambling, like prostitution, can never be totally eradicated. The malaise is too deeply rooted to be fought. They point out, for instance, that even children gamble for toffees and balloons, a truth that is especially applicable to the industrial areas bordering Calcutta.

Calcutta is India's soccer capital so it is not surprising that thousands of club fans bet on the outcome of football encounters. The three major football clubs—Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting—form the apex around which gambling in sport thrives. It is a familiar sight on the maidan to see spectators taking bets over the developments on the field in the next few minutes. Spectators even bet on whether a particular player will score a goal in the next few minutes or on something as banal as which team will enter the field first at the beginning of the match.

The West Bengal Gambling and

Assembly polls mostly in Cong-I bag

IT must have been clear by this time to most political observers that Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi will not face much difficulty in the first phase of their programme of consolidating their political authority. The elections in the nine states are not going to pose any serious challenge for them. The opposition Parties are hopelessly divided and in this situation even if the Congress (I) can secure 40 per cent of the votes cast they will definitely get 55 per cent of the seats and form their own Governments in all the nine states. I personally feel, in some of these nine states the Congress (I) will get more than 50 per cent of the votes and capture more than 70 per cent of the seats.

Other than in UP and Bihar, nowhere can the election battle assume any serious proportions. In these two states the caste factor will still play a significant role and a large number of the members of backward castes will vote for Charan Singh and Karpoori Thakur wherever they are. But the backward castes alone cannot give anyone more than 30 per cent of the votes and with that it is impossible to secure more than 40 per cent of seats in UP and Bihar in the present situation. I will of course be surprised if the Charan-Karpoori combination, along with their allies, can secure more than 30 per cent of seats either in UP or Bihar.

No doubt, the Congress (I) will face some difficulty in selecting the Party candidates in almost all the states. Even during the Lok Sabha elections there was infighting in all the state branches of the Party over ticket distribution. The Congress (I) is in power now at the Centre and the partymen are sure of getting a majority everywhere in this election and forming Governments in all the states. Naturally, there will be more clamouring and more intense fighting for Party tickets this time.

But Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay are also on much more solid ground now. If they want, they can deal with the problem of infighting sternly this time. No one in the Party will now dare to go against their verdict openly, however bitter he may be. Though Mrs Gandhi will still act as the impartial 'supreme court' of the Congress (I), in most of the cases Sanjay will be the high court, and except for a few fools, no Congress (I) man will dare to challenge the verdict of the Sanjay 'high court' in the



By BARUN SENGUPTA



Sanjay Gandhi

'supreme court' of Indira.

In all likelihood Sanjay will be overall incharge of the most difficult state of UP. Apart from being the vice-chief of the entire election battle of the Congress (I), he will assume the post of chief commanding officer on the UP front. From candidate selection to the counting operation, he will look after everything in UP. Secondly, the impact of infighting in the

Congress (I) will to a large extent be neutralised by the infighting between the opposition Parties. God alone can say to what extent they will go to finish each other during the state elections.

As soon as the Congress (I) can get almost all the major state Governments in its fold and command a majority in the Rajya Sabha, the first phase of the programme of consolidation of the political authority will be over. If they can get a majority in all the nine Assemblies it will be no problem for the Congress (I) to get a majority in the Rajya Sabha. And once they do that the Government will have less problems in Parliament. Then the second phase of the programme would start in full swing. In this phase, Mrs Gandhi and Sanjay will try to bring into the fold of the Party more state Governments. They will also try to get a two-thirds majority in the Rajya Sabha by May '82. When the Congress (I) has a two-thirds majority in both the houses of Parliament it will not be very difficult to get the Constitution amended according to their ideas and necessities of the situation.

Simultaneously, the process of consolidation of Sanjay's authority within the Party will also continue. His men will get the biggest share of Chief Ministerial and Ministerial posts in the states. His men will also come to the Rajya Sabha in larger numbers and get more important portfolios in the Union Cabinet. I know, a large number of Congress (I) men will violently contest this statement. They will assert that there is no separate Sanjay group in the Party. They will say, the entire Party has accepted Sanjay's position now. There is no question of Sanjay having a separate group within the Party.

But does Sanjay think that all the Congress (I) men, leaders and Ministers can be relied upon? Is he sure that all of them will stand by him in case of an Emergency? Does he not consider a large number of them time-servers? Would he not try to eliminate these time-servers and bring up his 'real friends' in strategic positions in a slow but steady process?

Wait and watch what he does during the next three months. And then, I am sure, most political observers will also realise that he is less emotional, more cool and much more ruthless in political battles than his mother. Most political observers have not seen even a fraction of Sanjay Gandhi yet.



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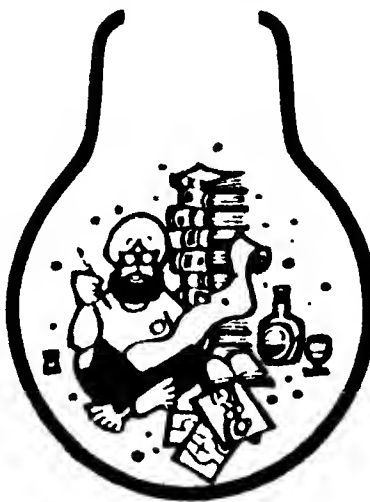
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How the "Illustrated" became a Weekly habit

KHUSHWANT SINGH on 100 years of the Weekly

FOR the first 89 of the 100 years of its existence, *The Illustrated Weekly* was seen in the waiting rooms of business executives, doctors and dentists. People looked at the strip cartoons, pictures of newly married couples and read the jokes page. The only readable part of the journal was C. R. Mandy's Gallimaufry eking painful humour out of Parsi dowagers with names like Flopsy Panwala. Mandy was eager to try his hand at more creative writing and was also having trouble with the management. (Most editors in the Times of India group of papers have trouble with the management). I was invited by J. C. Jain, the manager to whom Bennet Coleman owes its primary position as a publishing house, to be Mandy's successor. I accepted the offer and agreed to take on Mandy's assistant A. S. Raman as my number two. I was unable to take the job as I had received a Rockefeller Fellowship and Raman was elevated to the post of editor. He was young and totally inexperienced to handle the job. Besides, the elevation went to his head and he became insufferably arrogant. However, he must be given credit for Indianising the *Weekly*. Indian painting, sculpture, music and dance replaced the Eurasian cocktail title tattle that had been the *Weekly's* forte. The initial impact of the change was favourable. But after a while the *Weekly* became a tedious repetition of Ajanta, Ellora, the Taj Mahal, Bharat Natyam, Amrita Shergil, Husain, Swaminathan, Krishen Khanna, Bala Saraswati, Yamini Krishnamurthy and back to Ajanta and Ellora. The publicity given to certain artists proved enormously beneficial to them and to Raman who still owns a sizeable collection of paintings by eminent Indian artists. But Raman did little else to enliven the journal. He also indulged in what for an editor should be an unpardonable sin—of publishing his own pictures in the journal he edited. He was particularly devoted to Sai Baba and in one issue lauding his deity he had as many as eight pictures of himself and his family in various postures of worship. Raman fell foul of the management, was charge-sheeted and suspended from service. When he left the *Weekly* its circulation was lower than any of the innumerable magazines published by the Bennet Coleman group. His assistant Subroto



Banerjee held the fort for over a year. One of his functions was to submit a report to the board explaining the reasons why the *Weekly* was not doing well.

I took over as editor in June 1969. I was singularly lucky. The *Weekly* was so bad that no one could have made it worse. I was also fortunate in having no general manager or proprietor to boss over me. The Jains had been temporarily ousted from control and a kindly old retired chief justice of Gujarat, Mr K. T. Desai had taken over as chairman. One general manager followed another giving them little time to poke their noses in the running of the *Weekly*. By the time Uma Shankar became GM the *Weekly's* circulation had more than trebled itself and my position as editor made secure.

The *Weekly's* phenomenal success was the result of a simple prescription that I concocted for it. It consisted of three ingredients: inform, amuse and provoke. I decided that what the journal needed was one first-rate article of informative value, the rest could be devoted to amusement and provocation. I broke the stupid convention of avoiding politics. The lead articles were on political, economic and sociological subjects. The series on the different communities gave the journal its first major boost. The Bangladesh War followed by interviews with Indira Gandhi, Bhutto and Tikka Khan took the journal's circulation to over four lakhs establishing a comfortable lead of over 50,000 over other magazines in the country.

I also took more liberties with girls pictures. I never exploited nudity for the sake of titillation but invariably camouflaged it with some excuse. Being an agnostic, a political loner (I had also resolved to make the *Weekly* the spokesman of the Indian Muslims and other minorities) and an unabashed propagator of Hindi-Paki *bhai bhaism*, I had little difficulty in provoking my readers. They abused me. I loved being abused. We created a rapprochement between us.

Apart from the fortuitous external circumstances which helped the *Weekly* in its spiral climb to unrivalled circulation I must acknowledge the enthusiastic collaboration of some of my colleagues. The team was held together by Fatma Zakaria whose dedication and drive really put the *Weekly* on the map of India. Besides her there was the erudite and self-effacing R. Gopalkrishnan (R. G. K.) whose articles on various aspects of Hindu religion and culture were about the best published in India. R. G. K.'s Muslim counterpart was the eminent urdu writer, Qurratul Ain Hyder. Her articles on Islam and the Arabs were widely read. I also abolished the stupid convention of not giving bylines to junior members of the staff. There are many instances of young greenhorns who overnight became celebrities because of lead articles appearing in their names. The weekly spawned more editors than any other journal: M. J. Akbar, Bikram Vohra, Kalra, Fatma Zakaria (now editor of the Sunday edition of the *Times of India*). And there was Bachli Karkaria who through the *Weekly* became the most widely read freelance journalist.

It takes as long a time to build a journal as it does to strangle it. As the *Weekly* continues to conform to the formula of informing, amusing and provoking it should continue to hold its own. Few readers bother to read articles and are therefore unlikely to be put off by the mishmash of inanity that has begun to fill the weekly's pages. A publishing house like Bennet Coleman having the largest network of distributors in India can manage to keep up circulation of its magazines even though they have little that is readable in them. And even though everything fails there is the gimmick of producing an issue on cricket. *Dharmayug* beat all circulation records with a print order well into the five lakhs. But these can in the long run be counter-productive. It is also dangerous for a journal to be too closely associated with the personality of its editor. I made the mistake of making it synonymous with me and if I had been allowed to edit it much longer I would undeniably have done it irreparable damage. A journal should have a faceless editor. The *Weekly* has one now.

THE USSR airline Aeroflot has set the record for the slowest flight from London to Calcutta. The scheduled flight time is 20 hours, including a four-hour stopover and change of aircraft at Moscow. But passengers who took the Aeroflot flight at Heathrow in London on October 31 finally reached Calcutta on November 10. "And, what a flight it was," says Miss Arati Mukherjee, an employee of the West Bengal sales tax department in Calcutta, who was among the 60-odd passengers bound for Calcutta and Dacca by that flight.

The flight left Heathrow at around 2.30 p.m. (GMT), reaching Moscow late in the evening. Miss Mukherjee recalls: "It was snowing in Moscow, where we were to change planes for the onward journey. Soon after disembarkation we were asked to stand in a queue for passport and immigration check before being allowed to the transit lounge. As we proceeded towards the counter, an officer warned that some of us might be off-loaded. 'Sorry, not many room in this flight some stay Moscow for next flight', he said. But all of us kept

our fingers crossed and hoped it wouldn't actually happen. After some 50 of us had received our boarding cards the rest of the passengers were told that they would have to wait for the next flight. These passengers were also asked to deposit their passports at the counter before being taken to the Aeroflot Hotel.

"We were led to the lounge. It was centrally heated. All of us felt greatly relieved and even lively. Around midnight it was announced that the flight would leave in another 30 minutes. At 12.30 a.m. we were told to proceed towards the aircraft. Again a check at the passport and security control, following which we got back our passports. Then a long shivering walk back through the passage we had entered by where the temperature must have been around zero, to the tarmac where a bus was waiting to take us to the aircraft. After some ten or 15 passengers had crossed the barrier, the guard at the gate shouted out 'No more, no more'. Instantly a lady appeared and ran through the queue, saying that a few more passengers would be accommodated from among the unescorted ladies with babies or children. There

was a scramble in the queue and in that confusion the lady escorted a few more lady passengers to the gate and beyond. A young Bangladeshi housewife who had flown to London from Frankfurt alone with her barely eight-month-old child to catch the Aeroflot flight for her journey to Dacca ran to the door wailing, 'Let me go, please let me go, my child is already sick, he will die...' But the guard slowly pulled the door shut.

"As the door was closed, many of us, particularly the lady passengers, were telling ourselves that they had finally let us go. Certainly they won't keep us, we thought. After all, many of us were travelling alone and mostly for the first time in our lives on such a long trip. How could they be so heartless as to deny us seats on the flight, particularly after they had confirmed our tickets at the origin? But we were wrong again. Shortly, an officer came to collect the boarding cards issued to us earlier. With it, we were also asked to deposit our passports as well. Then we were shepherded through the transit lounge out of the terminal building where a bus was waiting to take us to the Aeroflot hotel. It was a 45-min"

Ordeal by Aeroflot

TOOSHAR PANDIT narrates the harrowing tale of a London-Calcutta flight that took 11 days



drive down a desolate and barren road and it snowed all the way to the hotel. When we reached the hotel it was 1.30 a.m.

"All of us were exhausted and hungry. All these hours we had nothing to eat. Nobody cared to ask. A middle-aged lady, sitting behind the counter at the reception-cum-office asked us to stand in a queue so that she could get our names properly, and allot accommodation to us. Two to three of us were to share one room. Unfortunately when my turn came, I had been left alone with all other lady passengers having been provided for already. Finally, the lady escorted me to a fifth floor room and banged the door. A German lady opened the door. 'This is the other occupant of your room' the lady from the reception counter announced and briskly walked away. The German lady did not seem to be very pleased to have me with her. I found that she had pulled out the sole blanket and sheets from the bed meant for me and piled them up on herself to keep warm. The room was absolutely cold and dreary. The heating system was not working. My roommate smiled apologetically as she handed over the blanket and the sheets to me. 'Sorry, I took them because I was feeling so very cold and could not get a wink of sleep', she said. I was too tired to talk even so I just nodded and collected the sheets and the blanket from her and made the bed. I thought of having a wash before going to bed. So I went to the toilet. There I found the taps dry and water leaking from the cistern. The stink there could make even a sweeper sick. The idea of a wash had to be dropped naturally. I flung myself on the bed with my shoes on. My whole body was aching for rest. But I could hardly have a wink of sleep. I saw that my room mate was also tossing and turning. The cold was so severe that the one blanket provided was not sufficient to beat it. After some tossing and turning, I got up as soon as I noticed faint rays of dawn filtering through the window and started looking for a more comfortable room. I found a third floor room where three other lady co-passengers had been billeted. There the heating system was functioning and I just dozed in a chair till we were called for our breakfast at around 8 a.m. to the fourth floor restaurant.



COMING down to the ground floor lounge after breakfast, I found quite a number of my co-passengers sitting on the floor and a few cushioned benches. Some of them, I was told, had to sleep there as they could not get rooms in the hotel. For the next five agonizing days the lounge became our address and the counter at the reception our focal point. We would squat in the lounge throughout the day except for brief intervals when we were called for breakfast, lunch and dinner. All the three meals were

just about the same—stale sour bread fried sausages, boiled peas, fried potato, and egg for those not having sausages. Twice or thrice they served chicken and boiled fish and beef stakes a couple of times. Only once during our five days we received few tea spoonfuls of rice. The food was adequate but did not suit most of our tastes. The best part of our meal was the ice-cream that used to be served after dinner. It was delicious. Most of the time the tea was lukewarm if not cold. Some of us did complain about it. But the one thing I have learnt from my experience is that appeals may move the great Sphinx but not the Russians. Even the Bangladeshi housewife failed to get milk for her eight-month-old baby for two days after her own stock of powdered milk had been exhausted. The baby too must have bread-sausage-pea-potato meals or starve. Some of us who cannot do without a cup of tea in the afternoon did make an attempt to get it. But failed. We were bluntly told that we were entitled to just two meals and the breakfast and nothing more. We were not even entitled to buy any food. Not that many of us had much foreign currency, I had just one pound, still. However, drinks could be had on payment.

"On Thursday November 1 afternoon, after a lot of persuasion, one of the ladies at the reception counter breaking her vow not to give us any information, indicated that a flight might be arranged on Sunday but it would fly directly to Dacca without stopping in Calcutta. The passengers bound for Dacca were elated. But their hopes were short-lived. There would be no flight on Sunday, we were told within an hour. Neither on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. The earliest we could take off was on Thursday, November 8. We went to our dinner that evening even more depressed. Some even started showing signs of nervous breakdown and hysteria. A Bangladeshi student studying medicine in London was so upset that most of the time he wept saying that his father must be dead by now. He was going to Dacca where his father was seriously ill. 'Oh Allah,' he would say, 'for what sin have you given me this punishment?' It seems I will not be able to see even the dead body of my father.

"Who could console him? We ourselves were feeling miserable. Each of us had just one set of clothing and underclothes with which we had boarded the aircraft in London. We did not have access to our baggage most of which at any rate, had been sent to our destinations. So we went without a change, without a wash. For some of us this became unbearable. On Saturday November 3, pestered by us, the ladies at the reception counter agreed that if we wanted we could go to the airport and pick up our baggage if it was still lying there. Two female passengers from Bangladesh hitch-hiked to the airport by an Aeroflot bus that left the hotel at 10 a.m. They re-

turned at dinner time, looking pale but clutching two small suitcases. They did not have anything to eat at the airport. If you missed your lunch at the hotel you missed it for the day. I was woken up by the lady from the reception that night with a knock: "Could you lend your blanket?", she asked. But I told her that I had just one. She said she knew that but she needed one for a child who was running high fever. I was flabbergasted. I told her she could certainly spare a blanket for the child from the hotel stores without waking up the occupants. To my surprise, she replied, 'hotel store empty—no blanket...all rooms full' and went on knocking at one door after another.

"Sunday, November 4. Information was hard to come by. Whatever little that trickled down from the reception counter only created more confusion. One of them said that a flight would leave for Bangkok during the day. Another said it would go to Karachi. Yet another said there might be a flight for New Delhi as well. We were also told that we could have a choice. When we asked what would be the arrangements for reaching our destinations if we took those flights, the eldest among the three sitting at the counter benignly smiled and replied, 'You will of course be on your own'. So, for most of us the flight to either Bangkok or Karachi became meaningless because none of us had enough foreign exchange to buy our passages to our final destination. A few foreigners and the two Bangladeshi female passengers who had on the previous day gone to the airport to trace their baggage were the only persons to avail of the opportunity. Those of us who were bound for Calcutta were more interested about the flight to New Delhi. But again the obvious question cropped up. After New Delhi what? Most of us did not have enough money to pay for even the taxi-fare from New Delhi airport to the nearest railway station. How would we then be able to reach Calcutta from New Delhi? The more solvent among us suggested pooling our resources. However at the end only three passengers managed to get seats in the New Delhi flight on that day. That too after squatting at the airport for hours.

"By this time we had reached the limits of our patience. We were feeling trapped and helpless. We were, dispirited and debated about our future. Some of us tried to get in touch with our embassies but they would not let us. They would not even let us call our friends or relatives in London, Calcutta or Dacca. The uncertainties became unbearable. Two among us could finally manage to dodge the surveillance and make it to the post office about 50 yards away. Each of them paid £6 for sending cables to their relatives in London informing of their plight. Subsequently however, I found out the cables had not reached the destinations. I encashed the solitary pound note in my possession to buy a 30-kopek aerogramme and write a letter to my relatives in Calcutta

The letter is yet to reach Calcutta.

"Things however precipitated in the afternoon. Some of us had entered the reception-cum-office room demanding a definite answer about our flight. At first, the stock answer don't know. But as we persisted, the ladies at the counter suddenly appeared to have gone deaf. Gesticulating with her hands one of them even tried to tell us that they could not follow English. But we were determined. Some among us were so furious that they started calling them names. 'You liars', one of them said, 'You cannot treat us like animals', another said. There was also some talk about the plight of the dissidents in the Soviet Union, some of the passengers going on hunger strike, and so on. The ladies at the counter were visibly angry. One of them shouted for the police. Another said she could send us to prison. Finally, all three of them left the office, after we refused to budge. As they went out they banged the door shut and then there was that click of the key turned from outside. We were imprisoned. We were, however, let out after 15 minutes or so. But by then we were so frustrated that we were already thinking that we were in condemned cells of a vast prison waiting for the hour of execution.

Tapan Das



Arati Mukherjee

age from New Delhi to Calcutta in the event of our getting seats on a Delhi flight. But as we got down, Mr Nag and Mr Sarkar advised us to go to the airport, 'Go and stay there. We will come by the next bus which leaves the hotel at noon', they said. So we boarded the bus again and the lady conductor did not object.

"After reaching the airport we came to know that a flight would leave for Delhi in another few hours. Three of us—Mrs Majumdar and the Bangladeshi student and I—immediately traced the top man at the airport, a large athlete type, to plead with him for seats on the Delhi flight. But he said that the flight was already overbooked. We despaired. But, the Bangladeshi student, doggedly pursued his objective for quite some more time. But without any luck. Having failed in our mission our throats went dry. I was wandering in the terminal building to find out where I could get some water. I froze when a security man shouted at me asking me to stop. 'You cannot move around like this, unescorted by our people', he said. He ordered us to get back to the transit lounge and stay put there. We obliged. Having nothing else to do we thought of looking for our baggage. We approached a lady with the request. At first she tried to dismiss us by saying the baggage had been taken care of and we need not worry about it. But when we insisted the lady said that as soon as she found out a person who could escort us to the place where baggage had been kept she would try to set our minds at rest. As we awaited in the lounge for the elusive escort, we thought of returning to the hotel but thought better, fearing that we might not get our rooms back in the hotel and be compelled to spend the night in the lounge as many others had to. So we just bit our nails and prayed.

Mercifully, however, we were offered lunch coupons at the airport. At around noon, Mrs Majumdar and I walked up to the restaurant to have our lunch. As we were returning to the lounge, having finished our lunch, a young Russian security personnel confronted us on the stairs. He would not let us proceed any further. He did not seem to know much English. So by making different signs we tried to tell him that we had come for lunch and was returning to the lounge to wait for our flight. But the officer did not follow. He also told us something in Russian which we could not understand. At this stage Mrs Majumdar tried to get past him but the officer stopped her by pulling her sari and then getting hold of her hand bag. For some time the two played a kind of tug-of-war. It abruptly ended as Mrs Majumdar started shouting at the top of her voice hurling the choicest abuses at the officer, all in Bengali. When I tried to tell her that the officer did not understand Bengali, Mrs Majumdar retorted saying that it did not really matter since the officer was talking in Russian all the time which she did not understand and she was right in talking to him in Bengali whether he understood it or not. Anyway, the officer finally let us proceed towards the lounge.

"Back at the lounge we found that Mr Nag, Mr Sarkar and a few other passengers had already arrived. There we learnt that those of us who wanted to get back to London could do so by a flight leaving in the afternoon. Some of the passengers having the necessary papers with them for reentering the UK were elated at the prospect. But many of us did not have entry permits for the UK. So the prospect of a flight to London did not inspire optimism among us. However, Mr Nag and Mr Sarkar told us that permit or no permit London would be a much more civilised place and officials there would certainly sympathise with us for our predicament. We were convinced. So six of us, bound for Calcutta, handed over our tickets to Mr Nag and Mr Sarkar requesting them to book our passages on the London flight. Having listed our names for the flight the others picked up their lunch coupons and headed for the restaurant at about 3 p.m. We started to get worried when we saw that they had not returned to the lounge even at 5 p.m. Lunch should not take so long, we thought. At 5.30 p.m. they arrived panting. They were also held up by the security personnel.

"At about that time it was announced that the flight to London would leave at 6 p.m. A lady came to the lounge and asked us to follow her to the next building to identify our baggage. My baggage was not there, it had already reached Calcutta. Some of the passengers found their baggage and identified them. From there we were rushed on to the tarmac and to the waiting bus. The lady handed over our passports and the boarding cards on the way as we marched

THAT night we made up our minds to pack up our belongings and proceed to the airport by the first transport available. We were convinced that unless we went to the airport and kept up our pressure to be flown out we had very little hope of reaching our destinations within the next few days. So, according to the plan, all the passengers destined for Calcutta packed their belongings at night and were ready for action. When the first bus parked in front of the hotel at around 10 a.m. on Monday to take the passengers booked for other flights to the Moscow airport, one of my co-passengers, Mrs Majumdar, a resident of Bowbazar, and I boarded the bus unnoticed. Three other co-passengers, Mr Nag, a business executive living in London, Mr Sam Sarkar, a barrister, and the medical student going to Dacca to see his sick father also got into the bus but were quickly detected by a Russian lady conductor. They were asked to clear out. For some time Mr Nag, Mr Sarkar and the Bangladeshi student tried to argue with the lady. But the lady would not listen and soon became abusive. Mr Nag and Mr Sarkar finally picked up their baggages and disembarked from the bus. But the Bangladeshi student stayed on. Come what may, he would not leave the bus. The lady also gave up. However, the ladies, seeing that Mr Nag and Mr Sarkar had disembarked, also got down from the bus. It was Mr Nag and Mr Sarkar who were the main promoters of the idea that we should go to the airport if we wanted to get out of this place quickly. Besides, they were the persons who had promised to help us with money for our pass-

towards the bus. Meanwhile, at the airport itself, before our departure, we came to know that those passengers whom we had left behind at the hotel, had been thrown out of the hotel and were being brought to the airport where they would be required to put up till flights could be arranged for them. The Aeroflot flight to London left at 6 p.m. After three hours, we reached Heathrow in warm weather. At the immigration counter Mrs Majumdar and I related our tale of misfortune and asked the officer-in-charge if we could be given entry permits for a month. The officer was extremely courteous and sympathetic. We left the airport at about 11 p.m. We took shelter for the night at Mr Nag's place.

Next morning I went to my sister's place in Harlow. From there I contacted one of my nephews in London asking him to collect my passport, the ticket and other papers from me and get in touch with the Aeroflot people in London for my journey to Calcutta. When my nephew contacted the Aeroflot office he was curtly told that the airline would not be able to do anything in the matter. Then they started to ask all sorts of question. Why did he come to plead the case for another person? Why did not the passenger herself turn up? After a lot of hassle, Aeroflot finally conceded that we should be put up in a decent hotel at the airline's expense till it could make a definite arrangement to fly us out to our destinations. Mrs Majumdar and I shifted to Fleming's Hotel on Moon Street, where Aeroflot had fixed up accommodation for us, in the afternoon of November 8.

The next morning, after breakfast, we walked to the Aeroflot office which was very close to the hotel. There I met other co-passengers. We were told by the Aeroflot people that there was a British Airways flight leaving for Calcutta that same afternoon. We are trying to secure accommodation for you in that flight but if we fail we will certainly put you on Saturday's flight, they assured. Then they gave us small slips and asked us to proceed for the airport forthwith and get in touch with the British Airways people there for our onward journey. The BA flight was scheduled to leave at 1.40 p.m. we were informed. No, Aeroflot would not be able to provide transport to Heathrow, we would have to arrange it on our own. Luckily I had taken £2 from my sister, so I could board a train at Green Park station for Heathrow by paying £1.20 for the ticket. At the airport we were in trouble again. The British Airways people were not sure if we could be accommodated on their flight. On top of it I got lost and could only find my way back to the BA office with the help of an elderly British gentleman who also carried my shopping packages. Barely 20 minutes before the departure, British Airways confirmed our seats. The plane however, left about an hour behind schedule. Next morning, the morning of November 10, at 8.30 a.m. we

finally reached Calcutta. There was nobody from the Aeroflot at the airport even to say sorry to us."

EVEN as the passengers were stranded incommunicado in Moscow for five days, the Aeroflot representatives in Calcutta were giving all sorts of explanations to their anxious relatives gathered at Calcutta airport. On November 1, when 24 passengers disembarked from the Aeroflot flight at Calcutta and did not include those who were expected, the airline representative claimed that because of some refuelling problem, a number of passengers had to be off-loaded and were likely to return to Calcutta from Delhi on November 3 by the Delhi-Calcutta flight of Indian Airlines. In Moscow also the stranded passengers were told that their flight was off because of refuelling problems created by strikes in Bombay, Calcutta and Dacca. At one stage the Soviet officials even suggested that passengers had been off-loaded to accommodate a large cargo of fruits being sent by the USSR government at the request of the Indian Government.

A section of Indian Oil employees were indeed on a go-slow agitation in India but none of the foreign airlines were affected by it till November 1, when the Aeroflot flight was due. Even more curious is the fact that the flight did arrive at Calcutta but without the expected passengers. If there was a refuelling problem how could the flight have been completed? Aeroflot does not have an answer. A more plausible explanation for the off-loading is the one available in diplomatic circles in Calcutta and New Delhi. The story is that the passengers were off-loaded to provide accommodation for a large number of Soviet officials bound for Calcutta and Dacca. Certainly a number of passengers who landed in Calcutta on November 1 were Russians.

When the passengers did not reach Calcutta even on November 3, as promised by the Aeroflot representatives, the relatives became frantic. The airline officials sought to reassure them along the following lines: "We have got in touch with Moscow", "we are expecting a telex from Moscow any moment now with details about the passengers stranded there and plans for their flight to their destinations", "They have been very comfortably lodged at the Aeroflot Hotel", "A sight-seeing trip has been arranged", and so on. It was only on November 5 that the relatives got an inkling that the passengers might be flown back to London. This was hardly any consolation for them. Aeroflot officials in Calcutta said at one stage that some of the passengers might have been taken out of the Aeroflot Hotel and lodged elsewhere for greater comfort (actually they were bundled out to the airport) and that Aeroflot was an airline which offered the best treatment to their customers!

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Chaudhury and Raj Narain fall out

It is all over for the Lok Dal bar the shouting, says AJJOY BOSE

HANUMAN has revolted against his erstwhile Ram. In an angry letter dated March 14, Mr Raj Narain wrote to Chaudhury Charan Singh, "I had once called you Chair Singh. I regret I change my opinion about you." The letter, which he would make public later, did not mince words. "You are not grateful to your friends. Nor do you take them in your confidence. The problem with you is that you cannot distinguish between sycophants and true and loyal friends", Raj Narain had written.

Ironic though it is, the break between the aging peasant patriarch and the most volatile quantity in Indian politics seems, in retrospect, almost inevitable. Even in the best of days when Raj Narain was declaring from the rooftops that he was Charan Singh's Hanuman, each had a completely different style of functioning. There were times when the Chaudhury had got scared and even irritated at the antics of his Hanuman. There were times when the Chaudhury took decisions on his own as when he decided to rejoin the Morarji Cabinet, and Raj Narain mentions this in his letter as one of his grouses against Charan Singh. There were even times when as Prime Minister, Charan Singh openly rebuked Raj Narain for his irresponsible utterances. But always, like the mythological Ram and Hanuman, the two had made up their differences. That is till the crushing defeat that the Lok Dal met with in the January mid-term polls.

The Lok Dal's performance in the elections had proved two things. The first was that the Party organisation was completely undisciplined and in certain areas downright chaotic. For this, the man who was held most responsible was Raj Narain who was in charge of the election campaign machinery. The second was that, in spite of the bad organisation, the Lok Dal had come through with the maximum number of seats apart from the Congress (I). This was obviously because of the popularity in the countryside of Chaudhury Charan Singh. If you examine the results constituencywise, the fact that Raj Narain was a major impediment in the polls becomes even clearer. In most constituencies in eastern and central UP, Raj Narain had been the one

who had distributed the election tickets and conducted the campaign. In 90 per cent of these, the Lok Dal had been defeated. In sheer contrast, the Lok Dal had swept nearly all the seats in western UP where it was Charan Singh and his lieutenants like Satpal Malik who were responsible.

After the polls, a large number of complaints were received against Raj Narain for not organising the election campaign properly, thus bringing defeat not only to himself but other Lok Dal candidates. Raj Narain and his group, however, countered all these allegations by saying that they had been given the most unsafe seats deliberately to defeat them.

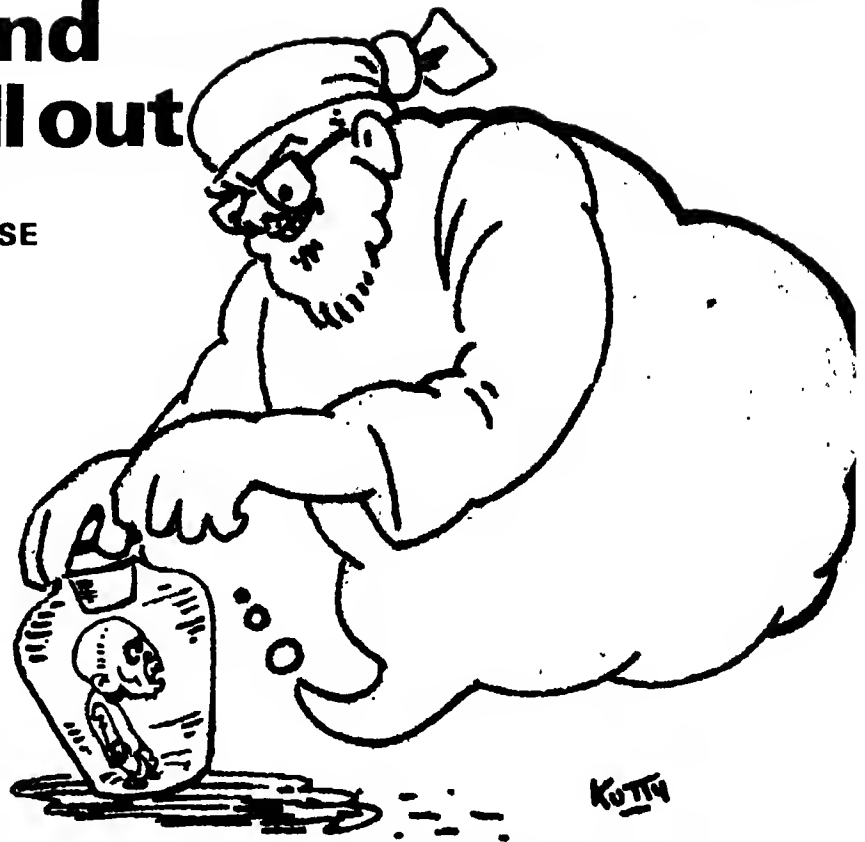
When the national executive was re-constituted in February, it became clear that the Chaudhury had decided to drastically reduce the power of Raj Narain and his group. The new executive was stacked heavily with anti-Raj Narain men and Raj Narain himself was demoted from working president to vice-president. The national executive was re-constituted very cleverly while Raj Narain was away at Rae Bareilly campaigning for the Lok Sabha by-elections.

When Raj Narain learnt this, he was furious and wrote an angry letter on February 26, protesting against the way he and his group had been treated. He pointed out that before the polls when the Lok Dal Party had been launched, the Chaudhury had promised that he, along with Raj

Narain, would jointly appoint the national executive. Raj Narain was particularly upset that his chief lieutenant, Vinay Kumar, former general secretary of the Party, was kept out of the executive, but Satpal Malik, who had been particularly vocal against Raj Narain was given a berth. Later the first meeting of the new national executive on March 8, witnessed a walkout by Raj Narain after he described the executive as "illegal and arbitrary".

By this time, the Lok Dal was divided into two distinct warring groups. One supported the Chaudhury and consisted of people like Satpal Malik, Narendra Singh and Mahadev Verma. The other group was led by Raj Narain and consisted of mostly socialists like Maniram Bagri, Vinay Kumar, Ram Naresh Yadav and Janeshwar Mishra. The main cause for conflict was the acceptance of the Chaudhury as the only leader of the Party. According to people like Satpal Malik, since the Chaudhury was the only really popular leader of the Party and was the only one who had a mass base, there should be no dispute over his being the sole leader. The Raj Narain group, however, alleged that this one-man leadership of the Party would be "authoritarian and ultimately dictatorial".

There was, however, a third group in the Party consisting of diverse elements who took an independent view. This group had people like



Madhu Limaye, George Fernandes, Karpoori Thakur, Devi Lal and Banarsi Das. This group was not happy with the Chaudhury as the only leader of the Party. They felt that the ideas of the Chaudhury were too old-fashioned and reactionary to have much relevance in the new political situation. They were also keen on changing the Party's image as of a purely peasant-oriented organisation. This group, however, also realised that the Chaudhury was extremely important as a figurehead and, particularly in the coming Assembly elections, the Party did not have a chance without him. So, there was no question of antagonising the old man without imperilling the future of the Party itself. At the same time, they felt the Party organisation should not be left in the hands of the Chaudhury and his men.

Significantly, Chandrajit Yadav initially subscribed to this view but later joined the Chaudhury's camp after Raj Narain launched an attack on Yadav under the instigation of Ram Naresh Yadav who nurses an old grudge against him.

It was the fertile brain of Madhu Limaye which hatched the plan of manoeuvring the Chaudhury to a corner and yet keeping him as the nominal leader of the Party. Since the national executive had already passed into the hands of the Chaudhury and his men, the Limaye-led group sought to capture the parliamentary board.

In what can only be described as a piece of audacious political forgery, a list was drawn up of the board in which Charan Singh's was the first name, Raj Narain's the second and most of the other names belonged to the Limaye group, including Madhu Limaye himself. The list was sent to the Chaudhury on March 10 for approval. It was here that a very clever political sleight of hand was played on the Chaudhury. Charan Singh had assumed in his characteristic simple Jat style that since his name was on top of the list, he was naturally the chairman of the board. He, therefore, signed the list without any protest.

As soon as the list was signed by the Chaudhury, the Limaye group coolly added "chairman" in brackets beside the name of Raj Narain. The list was released immediately by Madhu Limaye and the Chaudhury and his group were presented with a fait accompli. This, Madhu Limaye had reportedly calculated, would push the Chaudhury into the corner and since the list had already been made public, he would have no option but to swallow his pride and accept the situation. But Madhu Limaye had not accounted for the organisational skill of Satpal Malik. Within half an hour of the release of the list, news of the change in the original list, reached Satpal Malik who, along with Narendra Singh convinced the Chaudhury to withdraw the list whatever be the consequences. After some hesitation,

the Chaudhury agreed. Accordingly, Narendra Singh rang up the various newspapers and said that the list was cancelled.

The Limaye plan had badly boomeranged. Instead of unifying the Party, the withdrawal of the list acted as a catalyst for a split. A furious Raj Narain next day claimed that he was chairman of the parliamentary board and Narendra Singh was "nobody to withdraw any list". While still refraining from public criticism of Charan Singh, Raj Narain, however, said that the parliamentary board, of which he was "chairman", was "far from important than the national executive".

When the Chaudhury got news of Raj Narain's claim of being the chairman of the parliamentary board, he was furious. He rang up Raj Narain and asked him whether this was true. When his Hanuman admitted that he had talked in this vein, the Chaudhury was extremely angry. The next day he demanded that Raj Narain give an explanation for his conduct and statements. "It is this kind of conduct and lack of restraint on your part over a period of time that has brought the Party into disrepute over the country", the Chaudhury wrote in a letter to Raj Narain.

The letter simply put up Raj Narain's back. The same day he received the letter, he wrote two letters to the Chaudhury. In one letter which he made public the next day, he denied all accusations made against him by the Chaudhury and said that he had not violated any Party principle. The other letter was far stronger and directly abused the Chaudhury. This is the letter in which Raj Narain made a renewed reference to "Chair Singh". He also observed that the

Chaudhury could never keep his friends and had antagonised so many friends like C. B. Gupta and others.

Raj Narain held a Press conference the next day at which he openly declared that the Chaudhury had "no authority to either sack or suspend him from the Party". "People must remember that all Lok Sabha members have been elected on the Janata (S) ticket and I was elected president of the Party," he declared, indicating that he would take his revenge on the Chaudhury by denying him the use of the Party symbol for the coming Assembly elections.

All this while, the Limaye group had been watching the developments with increasing apprehension. Although they had reservations about the Chaudhury's leadership, they were not at all keen to openly revolt against him like Raj Narain. They, therefore, tried to work out a compromise formula between the Chaudhury and Raj Narain to prevent an imminent split. The compromise formula on the one hand required Raj Narain to surrender the Janata (S) symbol and accept the Chaudhury as the leader of the parliamentary board. On the other hand, it required the Chaudhury to forgive and forget about the statements of Raj Narain and retain him on the parliamentary board.

The compromise formula, although it helped postpone the crisis by a few days, proved a patent failure for both groups had reached a point of no return. For the moment, therefore, there seems not much chance of a patch-up between the Chaudhury and his Hanuman and although they had quarrelled and made up many times in recent history, this seemed to be the final break.





ONCE upon a time, many, many moons ago, when this century had just about begun teething, there was born in Simla to a charming British couple a lovely little girl with golden locks and sparklers in her eyes. They christened her Mollie, and she, like all the little 'babalog' of the British Raj, grew up in India. Her family ties with the country were long established, earlier generations having served the Raj with both loyalty and distinction.

A little wild-eyed and full of this great big sense of adventure, Mollie came to Delhi when she was just ten. Her father was a busy man and pushed off to work every morning and would return only late in the evening, well past the cowdust hour. Sir Cecil Kaye, as he was known, was son of William Kaye of the Bengal Civil Service, who was among the last to attend Addiscombe, the East India Company's college. Sir Cecil served in the Indian Army with distinction and soon became Director of Central Intelligence, a rather crucial job in those days when the native principalities and kingdoms ruled by maharajas and administered by British officials were often at each other's throats, many of them vying for the favours of the British Raj. Her mother was pretty and gay and enjoyed *la dolce vita*, and little Mollie and her sister were left alone with their charming *ayah* to do as they pleased.

When Mollie first came to Delhi from Simla, which was then the summer residence of the Viceroy, her father was President of the Council of an Indian state, part of what is known as Rajasthan these days, and she often accompanied him on his official visits to other parts of the country. It was during one of these trips that an Indian first told her a story that had been handed down from one generation to the next: the story of a colourful and impressive

by the efforts of the bride's family to substitute another daughter at the last moment.

Many years after hearing this tale, when the Raj was a distant memory and Rajputana had reverted to its old name of Rajasthan, Mollie (by then, M. M. Kaye, an aspiring writer of small time detective fiction and children's books) stumbled across the same story in a diary kept by a young English officer who had figured in the incident somewhat peripherally. She remembered the version told to her years ago by that unknown Indian and even though she was busy working on another book at that time, in which the butler had bumped off the Grand Vizier's wife, she decided that here were the rumblings of the novel she had always wanted to write—a riproaring, cinematic extravaganza with the cast of millions and sets that would have put de Mille to shame. And thus was born *The Far Pavilions*.

Life's little ironies overtook Mollie but she remained undaunted and, as she marked time waiting for her Prince Charming, that tiny little seed planted in her mind sprouted, grew, and ultimately became her magnificent obsession — *The Far Pavilions*, which was completed over fifteen long years, at the end of which she suddenly found she was Cinderella! Meanwhile, she had married Geoff Hamilton, an officer in Queen Victoria's Own Corps of Guides, and spent years in Quetta, Dehra Dun, Kulu, Coimbatore, Madras and even on a houseboat on the Dal in picturesque Srinagar. What better setting can a writer dream of! Yet for ten years after her marriage she found she could hardly write a word, so caught up was she in the multicoloured hues of her honeymoon.

The rest is history.

The Far Pavilions made publishing history when it was first published two years ago. It has sold over 400,000 copies in hardback worldwide and many, many more copies in paperback. It has topped bestseller

CONVERSATION

Jane kahan g

M. M. KAYE, bestselling author
as the canvas for her novel



ye woh din...

ress who used colonial India
talks to PRITISH NANDY



lists on both sides of the Atlantic, a rare feat, and even India has succumbed to the publicity onslaught Penguins launched internationally to ensure that this blockbuster does not go off the charts. Its runaway success has been accompanied by bugle blasts, trumpet blowing, showering of confetti and an enormous publicity budget running into almost £ 100,000, which any publisher would tell you is unthinkable in today's competitive pricing scene.

Overnight, everyone from thirteen to eighty is discussing *The Far Pavilions* and *Gone With The Wind* has almost paled into insignificance beside it, as the dusky princess Anjali of the fictitious kingdom of Gulkote stepped into the Tara-born Scarlett O'Hara's dainty shoes, against the magnificent backdrop of the Sepoy Mutiny, and this saga of love and sacrifice, heroism and mayhem comes alive in vivid colours, larger than life and far, far removed from the authentic milieu of India in 1857 as we have read about in our history books. But then, Mollie was never in search of truth. Romance, adventure, lucre and fame were what she sought. And these are precisely what she has found in ample measure.

IT all began with a rather nasty review of *The Far Pavilions* that I did for SUNDAY some months back when Penguins brought the book to India with much fanfare. Never had I then bargained for an actual confrontation with Mollie Kaye, its author. But Penguins never give up, and I found myself roped in one strange spring afternoon to meet Mollie Kaye at Dotti Irwing's suite in the Oberoi Grand, where I was treated to a cup of tea and a charming display of truly English tact and discretion, while Mollie Kaye took me on an exotic Uran Khatola ride into the mid nineteenth century, full of delightful anecdotes, historical gossip, colourful tales of romance and bravery. All

delightfully British; and all, much as I would hate to admit it, utterly enchanting.

She was in India, leading what has been sold as *The Far Pavilions* tour—a special programme marketed by Penguins in collaboration with Cox and Kings, Air India and the India Tourist Office, where the visitors travel in the footsteps of Ashton Hilary Akbar Pelham-Martin (more conveniently known as Ash, the macho hero of M. M. Kaye's novel) all across the predictable tourist country of north India, the eternal mix of Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Udaipur and Srinagar, but differently packaged this time. Calcutta drew her perhaps because of the book fair that had just opened, and because (I would love to believe) one nasty reviewer had to be won over.

When I entered Dotti Irwing's suite, there she was, sitting in a chair slightly big for her, with the afternoon sun rippling on her carefully combed silver hair as the breeze from the open window gently moved the curtains once in a while. She stood up, all five feet of her, and stretched out her arms to welcome me, smiled, and almost swept me off my feet with "But it is I who should be interviewing you, my dear!"

Before I could recover, she lammed the point home. "I was just reading your latest book. Enjoyed the poems very much indeed. Would you please autograph my copy for me?" Out came the book, flagged in two places, as Dotti lent me a pen. "I will show you my favourite poem", said Mollie Kaye, as I signed the book, slumped into a chair that now seemed a bit large for me too, and switched on the taperecorder, trying desperately in the meanwhile to marshal my responses.

The diamonds flashed on her fingers. Eagle wings glittered from the brooch that nestled between her collar bones. There was a touch of nostalgia in the cut and the khaki of her dress. Mollie Kaye has indeed grown up from the tousle-haired little girl

playing in the Mutiny Cemetery into a charming colonial *memsahib*, delightfully self-assured or at least pretending to be so.

On the success of "Far Pavilions"

"It was exciting. Very exciting really! I've written all my life and never thought that I'd get anywhere. And then, suddenly, you hit the jackpot! I mean, I just can't believe it yet!"

On her choice of the Mutiny as the setting for both her novels.

"The Mutiny was such an essential part of my childhood. Curzon House, our winter residence, was very close to The Kashmir Gate, the most famous of the four main gateways into the walled city of Delhi. In our kitchen garden stood a brick and stone plinth that had been raised to mark the site of a siege battery used in the final assault on Delhi in the autumn of 1857. The *mah* stacked his flowerpots there but Betty, my sister, and I knew that it did not belong to him but to us. For our name was cut into the stone.

This particular battery had, in fact, been commanded by General Edward Kaye, a first cousin of our grandfather's. My grandfather studied at the East India Company's college, Addiscombe and I still have his passing out certificate! This is where Alex Raudali (the fictional hero of *Shadow of the Moon*) also went.

On the other side of Curzon House, in the garden of what was, in our day, the Old Delhi Club, stood another siege battery. And beyond the wall of our garden, just behind the Kaye Battery, was the Mutiny Cemetery, in which many of the men who died during the recapture of the city were buried. On the far side of the cemetery were the Nicholson Gardens, where Nicholson, the "Hero of Delhi" stood in statue, sword in one hand and facing the Kashmir Gate, where he had been mortally

wounded while leading an assault. And just opposite to the entrance was the Kudsia Bagh, which you read of in *The Far Pavilions*.

All these places were our playgrounds. Ayah took us there for our morning and evening walks. We spoke Hindustani better than English and heard all the gory tales about the Mutiny, naturally from the Indian viewpoint. These stories were told by people who had actually been there and remembered what they saw and heard, or by those who had learned about it at first hand from parents or relatives who had fought in it. For in those days, the Mutiny was no further away than the First World War is to many people nowadays. And there are still many people around who can remember the War.

These stories of the Mutiny became my staple diet. Mainly because I could see and walk all over the places where the things I was told had actually happened. They became immediate for me. Much more immediate than Hans Christian Anderson could ever be. I revelled in them and I can still remember the thrill of discovering, on a visit to Lucknow, the old soldier in charge of the cemetery in the Residency Grounds, where Sir Henry Lawrence and all those who had died during the siege of the Residency had been buried. He was a member of the garrison and had been a drummer boy at the time!

You know, many years later, when we were in school in England, my father said one day, "You will be surprised, they have found the missing Kaye Battery!" We told him that we knew where it was all the while, under the *mah*'s flower pots and watering cans. "Why didn't you tell us?" he asked. "You never asked us!"

The Mutiny never came to us through history books. We heard everything from people around us. For instance there was this *sadhu*, an old man and a great friend of ours—who wore nothing but a loin

cloth and lived in a bamboo grove. He told us many stories from the Ramayana. Once when he was telling us about his boyhood, he described that fateful day when he was bathing in the Jamuna very early in the morning and he saw a red cloud of dust on the other side of the river. It turned into the cry of men who were shouting and firing their rifles, and as they came charging across the river bed he saw that they were men of the third cavalry who had revolted the night before in Meerut and were coming to rouse Delhi.

Then there was this old woman who said to me that the first time she ever set eyes on the Gora Paltar was when the massacred soldiers of the Red Fort were thrown into the river. They were carried down by the tide and were caught in the eddies under the main bastion of her father's fort. She had been taken aback for she was just a child and had never seen humans with such fair skins."

On her taking to writing

"I needed the money very badly. I was actually an illustrator and spent a fairly long time in the Chelsea illustrators' den. That is how I made some money for my father had died a little too suddenly and we were not doing well at all. I was looking after my mother in England.

I mainly worked on children's books. On all that stupid, boring stuff about rabbits and hedgehogs. And then one day, while doing some illustrations for the grey rabbits books, which were then in great demand—even the royal children read them—I said to a colleague that anyone could write such hogwash. She dared me to try.

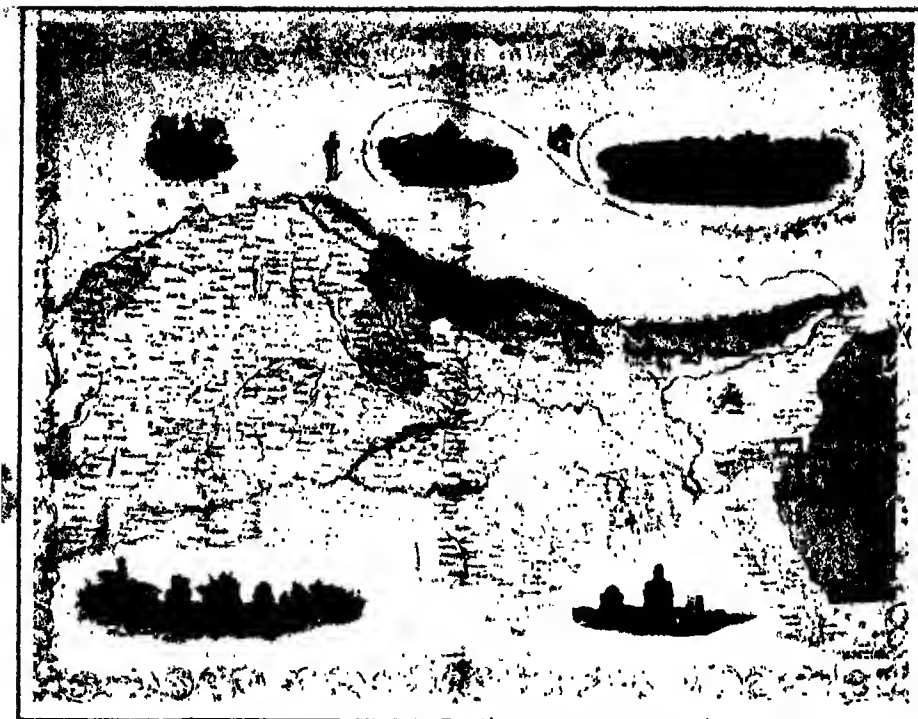
I took up her challenge and, not knowing anything about how to submit manuscripts to publishers, I sent a script written in laborious longhand to Collins. It was in a smallish pocketbook and when Billy Collins, who came every Friday to see new children's manuscripts at his office, was told by his secretary that some idiot had sent in a handwritten manuscript in a pocket book and could she throw it into the waste paper basket, out of sheer curiosity for this imbecilic writer he asked for it and took it home. He read it aloud to his children and they enjoyed it and I was promptly called on Monday morning to meet the publishers!

That's how it all began. And though it never brought me jam and cake, my writing ensured our bread and butter."

On her thrillers and romantic whodunits

FROM children's books I turned to romantic thrillers. They had a quick sale and it was quite interesting doing them. I carefully worked out the plot and then wrote it chapter by chapter, leaving a clue in each chapter. It was all rather silly but one did not have





to do any research on these, and frankly they were quite easy to write."

On other thriller writers like Agatha Christie

"Agatha Christie was rather good. But she wrote a lot of awful rubbish as well. And did you know that she wrote a lot of schoolgirl romances on the sly, under another name. No one knew till many years later. When she was asked why she wrote them under another name, she said it was because she knew no one would touch them even if they appeared under her own name. I think she must have been embarrassed by the stuff she wrote!"

There are others too but I don't care much for the genre. I wouldn't have touched the stuff if there was no money in it."

On romance writers like Barbara Cartland

"Terrible stuff, most of them. Barbara Cartland sells 400 million copies of her books and I do assure you that you can't read them even if you tried. But somebody somewhere does! I would have been ashamed of the stuff!"

Barbara is quite an intriguing woman. She was a great friend of the Mountbattens and they often gave her ideas for plots! Immediately after *The Far Pavilions* became a hit, she churned out a book on India, with the same setting!

She does twenty-three books a year. Just dictates them to her secretary. She is a very wealthy woman and when she writes she says she must not see anybody around her! And there she lies on her couch with her white fur rug over her and her white pekinse by her side and the secretary at the back, behind the couch. And it just pours out, the

stuff! I am deeply envious when I say this. A question of sour grapes you know. But her book on India had the facts all wrong!

It was about somebody who had disguised himself as an Afghan and crossed the border. The hero, for instance, was up there in the North West Frontier province. He was a major I think, and he had done some brilliant deed and got the VC and so they made him Governor of the province. They don't do that kind of thing! They never did! Then, for instance, in the same book, the Governor's House in the province moved in summer from Peshawar to Nainital! Someone was obviously pulling her leg! She must have asked someone and I suppose if I had been

asked I couldn't have resisted it either!

That's the kind of stuff which makes romance writing these days. A lot of money in it. But what stuff!"

On being rich

"Terrible!"

I am reminded of Barbara Hutton, who was then married to some Belgian or Swedish Count, I forget which one. But she was known as the Countess Revencler in those days. She was travelling through India and had dropped in at Hyderabad. Every time I went shopping with her I realised how boring it must be to be so rich! She could buy almost anything in the world. And we used to go to these gem shops and she would sit there with a bored look on her face and choose the odd diamond or half a dozen emeralds and rubies, each costing a minor fortune. But she would never look happy or excited.

I would much rather save through all my life and buy a small sapphire that would give me immense joy. It is this craving for something, this effort to save and buy it which makes all the difference. It means lusting for something.

This reminds of another incident related to Barbara, who had by then run through a long string of husbands already! We were to lunch with Salar Jung, you know, the man with that fabulous collection of antiques. Barbara turned out in full regalia to impress the old man. She had heard of your famed Indian hospitality and someone had told her that anything you admired in your host's residence was promptly handed over to you as a gift.

After lunch, the old man brought out his priceless collection of swords and daggers, a truly incredible museum of antiques. Barbara was particularly taken up by one beautiful



dagger: it was made of a solid emerald shaped like the head of a parrot, with rubies for its eyes and beak. Through a small hole in the head passed a tassel with strings of beautifully shaped pearls on either side. So she kept praising it again and again, and refused to see anything more. Finally, a disgusted Salar Jung had the collection packed up and sent back to his museum for safe keeping!"

On bestsellers

It is a difficult proposition trying to write one. The first one I wrote. I took to see my agent with, pleased as the Cheshire cat. He kept it for a week and then asked me for lunch the next weekend. I was delighted, and turned up fully prepared to hear about its publishing plans.

After lunch, Paul looked up and told me, "Mollie, it stinks!"

The Far Pavilions was a bit of luck. The earlier historical novel, *Shadow of the Moon*, was published so drastically edited that it read like hiccups! Everything historical was left out. The publishers thought a book with India as the setting was sheer suicide. The Americans did worse with it — and I could do nothing at that time. Who would have listened to me! The only Indians the Americans know are Red Indians and they still believe India is inhabited by Red Indian tribes!

It was only after the unprecedented success of *The Far Pavilions* that I insisted *Shadow of the Moon* be reprinted in its entirety. And this time, on resurrection, it has worked. This book has also done very well, exploding the myth that anything about India condemns the book to oblivion."

On Paul Scott

"A great friend and an excellent writer. I owe a great deal to his encouragement. He has impeccable taste and I would depend a lot on his sense of judgement."

On John Masters

"I had met him once and he said, 'When I lie awake, worrying about unpaid bills, I get up and write another story, with a lot of rape and sex in it. It sells very well indeed!' But I did enjoy his *Bugles and a Tiger*."

On India as she sees it today

"Things have changed immensely. One feels totally alien. In Pakistan, I met many young people but could hardly understand a word of what they were saying. Yet when I met a Pathan who had once saved my husband's life in battle, I could easily understand his chaste Pushtu. The Urdu they speak today is so different that I don't have a clue what they are talking about!

Things here have also changed a great deal. We would have loved to stay on after the "handover" but my husband was not trained for any-

thing but the army. So when we were transferred to Palestine, we went. But I still love and cherish the India we lived and grew up in. In fact, a lot of English people do. We have a charming relationship still in existence with India. That's what others envy.

An American I met the other day mentioned, "How come wherever you people go you still get such a warm welcome -- India, for instance, thirty years after the colonial break-up, still welcomes you! Look at us! Can you imagine an American like me going to Vietnam without getting shot? We Yanks are welcome nowhere where we've stayed and fought!"

I find India very beautiful, still very, very charming: 'That vast glit-



tering; cruel, mysterious and sun-baked continent' which my blurbs speak of."

On Calcutta

"I once stayed here for six months with my sister who married a Burmah Shell officer. I remember the Victoria Memorial and the Emily Eden sketches. The woman herself was a tiresome snob, though!"

I learned wash painting from the collections in the museum and many of the murals and paintings I did followed the techniques I picked up here. You should have seen some of the paintings I did for the Dehra Dun Club or the murals I had done for that building on King George Avenue which the Mountbattens later took over.

I only wish I could use H. G. Wells' time machine and keep coming back to Calcutta at different points of

time! It is such an incredible city and I can understand why you love it so much. In between the bustees and the backstreets you suddenly see this exquisite Portuguese wrought iron work!

I remember the dances at the Saturday Club and colourful social life of Calcutta, unmatched by any other city anywhere. I would always love to come back here."

On cancer and how she fought it

"I came to visit Mardan in the North-West Frontier Province, now a part of Pakistan, in the autumn of 1963, with the intention of researching for *The Far Pavilions*. This was where my husband's regiment was based for almost a century. And on my return to England, I started working out the details of the plot. I had just reached the fourth chapter, when the doctors discovered I had cancer and after a battery of tests and X-rays it was decided to have a lung removed.

But when the surgeon had a look at it he thought it was not really necessary to take the lung out and so he sewed me up again. Then began those long cobalt ray sessions. They left me feeling like a piece of chewed string for months afterwards, and then again there was this relapse.

But I was determined not to give up till I finished the book. I told the doctor that it would be absurd to let all my research go waste. Cancer would have to wait, I am afraid. As my doctor said later, there are hundreds of cases like mine, where cancer has been fought and conquered. But people only seem to hear of those handful of cases where cancer wins. Tell me, how can one die halfway through writing a novel?"

AND thus the evening wore on, as I sat listening to the world of Mollie Kaye. She spoke of a world she dreamt of, and wrote about with eagerness and love. It is a world I am alien to, and know very little about, being born free and not given to looking back overmuch. Her own mother, Mollie Kaye pointed out, spanned the period between horsedrawn buses and the Concorde.

It felt all wrong to tell her what I thought about her books, particularly as she graciously gave me their autographed hardback editions, which I will preserve with love and nostalgia. Just as I will preserve memories of a charming afternoon when I sat back and listened to tales of romance and battle, love and loyalty, all drawn with strong, vivid lines on a canvas one century old.

I am not a critic; I am human enough to still distinguish between a brook and its author. As a novel *The Far Pavilions* may be a minor disaster, the kind of sloppy, sentimental saga I would hate to be seen reading; but Mollie Kaye is different. Courage, candour, and the joy of living: that's what sets her apart.

Workers at war

Price of being unionised?

THE peace and quiet of a series of workers' colonies in Hansi, an industrial town in Hissar, also known for its ancient temples, was cruelly shattered on February 21. Late in the day, as the residents—mainly families of a large number of immigrant workers in Hansi Cooperative Mills—were retiring to sleep, lathi and dagger-wielding hoodlums and policemen stormed their houses, beat up the men, robbed, abused, molested and even raped women. The assaults followed a couple of incidents at the mill, said to be the result of tension between a large number of immigrant workers—mostly from Bihar, UP and Orissa—and local workers, loyal to the management.

In the confrontation, the line-up that emerged was the management, police and local workers on one side and the powerful CPI(M)-supported CITU workers' union fighting for the immigrants, on the other. Though the mill's management and police were desperately portraying the February 20-21 incidents as a war between two workers' groups, the CITU union alleged that the attacks were the result of collusion among the management, locals and police, against the union.

The cloth mill, inaugurated on January 26, 1978 by former Chief Minister Devi Lal is one among several Haryana industrial projects to be dragged into conflict recently. Though workers' recruitment does not follow the sons-of-the-soil policy, the mill's management is naturally appointed by the State Government from Chandigarh. The workers, especially the vast immigrant force, were unhappy with the way the mill's managing director Harji Lal and a group of about 20 locals, said to be his proteges, treated them. As things are, the workers' living conditions are terrible. Most of them live in dark, dingy one or two-room houses beside dirt roads in the town. Work in the mill is in three eight-hour shifts, starting at 3 am, 11 am and 7 pm. A number of locals frequently absent themselves. Since the work is done on four nine-man spinning lines, absenteeism on any of them leads to the others being burdened with more work, for which they do not get paid.

The first incident at the mill, which acted as immediate provocation, occurred on February 10 at about 10.45 am when Abdul Hameed, a worker from another state, was beaten up inside the mill with a blunt instrument. The beating left several scars on him. Among those allegedly involved in the attack was Balwan

Singh, a helper. Hameed was brought to hospital and treated, and the next day an FIR was lodged in the Police Station, City. No action was taken, thereafter.

In the early morning shift between 3 am and 11 am, on February 20, work was in progress on all the four lines. One of them however, was being operated by eight men since the ninth, a local worker, was habitually absent. Refusing to put up with his repeated absence, two immigrant workers on the same line Surrender Pandey and Babu Lal, complained to the jobber on the shift, Pau Lappa. The absent worker's attendance for the day was cancelled, which meant he would not be paid for the day. Avenging the complaint, three local toughs Jagan Singh, Rajender Singh and Sajjan Singh, attacked the two immigrants with lathis and daggers outside the mill gate at about 11 pm, when they were leaving after the shift.

Shortly afterwards, at around 11.30 pm, the immigrant workers retaliated by chasing one of the assaulters, Jagan Singh, to the Chungi on the Grand Trunk Road, and stoning him. The reprisal followed another attack on Surrender Pandey, Babu Lal and Shyam Narain, who were on the controversial shift, near the railway station. The victims were saved by other workers who arrived on the spot. Meanwhile workers' union president Phool Singh was also beaten up by a policeman, Havildar Rajender Singh, and taken to the city police station where several cases were filed against him.

The attacks and reprisals continued till the next day. Around 9.15 am the following morning, Ram Bahadur of UP was assaulted while riding a bicycle. Ten to 15 people charged at him with lathis and pincers near the Chungi on G.T. Road. Ram Kishan and Prithvi Singh who came to his rescue cried out for help to people in the locality. Seeing people rushing out of their homes and coming for them, the attackers fled.

Meanwhile, the police had begun their rounds. From 11 am till 2 pm on February 21, no less than 75 to 104 workers were allegedly taken to the police lock-up. Nand Lal, and Gobind Ram, two workers who were taken away, showed this reporter marks of injuries on their legs, and hands. Gobind Ram's wrist was fractured from police beating: "His belt number was 1097, I remember that. This constable came in with an officer and some goondas. There were seven or eight of them in all. They

hit me with lathis and left in their van." Ram Dhari was washing clothes in the courtyard of his house in Boga Ram colony when the police and hoodlums arrived: "They hit me with a danda, took me to jail and beat me up there. They were stinking of liquor." The workers allege they were beaten up in jail and ordered to confess that they were fighting among themselves. Even the 22 who were taken to hospital were allegedly asked to give false evidence: "The doctors were told we had been quarrelling among ourselves and thus had to be imprisoned," one of the victims in Boga Ram Colony said. "In jail we were brutally beaten with leather straps and lathis," he added. Most of the people were picked up by the police from houses in Malya Mandi, Bhatia Colony, Boga Ram Colony, Roop Nagar, Gandhi Colony and Kacheri Piche or Vakil Colony.

The very same evening when most of the men were missing in the areas that had been raided, the police and local hoodlums began another brutal attack—this time on the women. A picture of the atrocities could be reconstructed from several eyewitness accounts: Kaushaiya (25), wife of Ramji, a worker from UP, said at least eight to nine persons stayed in her room for about one hour. Telling her story to a group of officials including the SSP and DC, Hissar, she broke into tears. She said she had no protection. The neighbours had gone to the fields, so she couldn't even cry for help. The men snatched away her jewellery.

Maina (20) of Malya Mandi was carrying when the attackers came at night. With her was her sister Sona Devi. About 12 people stormed into the house, grabbed their necklaces and bangles. Sona said: "They have taken everything".

Three young women—Sushila, Lilawati and Hiramati, all aged between 25 and 30—who live on the second floor of a house in Roop Nagar were treated similarly. The police, they said, had caught their husbands earlier in raids on the factory. At about 1 am that night three policemen entered their house. None of them wore their berets. They kicked the door open, started beating the three women, and snatched their nose-rings, ear rings, necklaces and bangles. Hiramati showed a torn saree and blouse as evidence of manhandling.

Chandrawati, another worker's wife from Bastar, MP, also a resident of Roop Nagar, said the police entered her house at about 2 pm in the afternoon, when they were picking up the workers, and took her ornaments away. A similar story was that of Phulmati, who had arrived from Bihar only a few days before the incident. The police came to interrogate her about her husband who works in the mill and allegedly left

with her ornaments.

Saraswati, the wife of another worker from Bihar who lives in Roop Nagar, said that goondas had opened her box and taken her money and ornaments away. Although she had a baby in her arms, the hoodlums caught her and tried to rape her. The attackers fled after the neighbours were alarmed by her loud cries for help. Saraswati's tattered blouse and saree were shown around for evidence. Residents of Vakil Colony, were the safest because of the help and protection they received from local neighbours.

Seventy-six of the workers arrested and kept in the lock-up were released on bail between 2 and 3 pm on February 22. The rest, including the union president Phool Singh, were released on bail after 8 pm on February 24. Singh had been without food for two days.

The trouble did not end there. On the 22nd, when the union's joint secretary, Satbir Singh, visited the factory for an inquiry into the incidents, according to the union's spokesman, he was arrested. The spokesman alleged that the mill's security officer tipped the police off about his arrival, and within minutes the surprised leader was picked up in front of the mill gate by the SHO, two havildars and ten other policemen. At the police station he was allegedly beaten. A special target for beating was his left hand, with which, the police allegedly told him, he had "raised many a slogan". (Mr Singh is a southpaw). Singh's left hand was numb after the beating. No food was given to him at the police station, and on the 24th, when all others had been let off, he was the only one who remained in the lock-up.

The mill's immigrant workers struck work from February 21 to March 2 in protest against the atrocities of the local toughs and policemen. On February 29, when they took out a procession at about 6 pm near Sabzi Mandi, goondas stopped them again, picked out a few in the crowd and told them: "Ya to tum yaha se bhag jaon ya tumhe mar diya jayega." (Run away or you shall be beaten up). CITU workers said this showed that it was only the immigrants and not the local hoodlums who were arrested.

The police's version, a different story of course was given by the Police Station, City SHO, who was transferred after the incidents. The trouble, he says, started when some immigrant workers assaulted locals at about 11 pm near the Hissar Octroi post on February 20. A case (FIR No 44 under Sections 302/149 and 149 IPC) was registered against 12 of them. The attack enraged the locals, who retaliated by calling out one Habibullah from his house in Vakil Colony and beating him up between 10 and 11 am on the 21st. The victim was medically examined, and a case (FIR No 45 under sections 148/149 IPC) was filed against eight or nine persons. The immigrant workers collected near the Octroi

post again, this time about 300 to 400 of them, armed with lathis, sticks and bricks, and marched to the civil hospital where the locals had collected. In order to prevent large-scale trouble the SHO and OC of the Police Station, City rushed to the spot and arrested 75 persons under sections 107 and 151 CrPC. During the arrests, 22 persons were hurt with lathis and had to be taken to hospital. The SHO admits it was a "raid by mistake, the random beatings could not be helped". Again on the 22nd morning eight to nine locals went to one Shyam Lal's house and beat him with

lathis. Cases (FIR No 46, dated 22.2.80 under sections 452/148/149/323 IPC) were registered against them. The SHO says all arrested persons were bailed out by the SDM on February 22. Eight affidavits were received from women who said they were victims of attacks. Six of these are charges of molestation, and two of rape. The SDM received the applications on the 27th, and ordered their registration on the 28th. A magisterial level inquiry was ordered into the incidents.

NIRMAL MITRA, Hansi

One more for the road

Ex-Chief Minister out vote-catching



Sharad Pawar

THERE is nothing guaranteed to turn one into a fighter for the cause of the people than the urge to regain one's lost throne. Because having tasted power and known the indescribable intoxication that it produces, one's lust for it is stronger. This is the case of Mr Sharad Pawar. He became Chief Minister overnight in 1978 when he ditched the Government led by Vasantdada Patil and collaborated with the Janata. As a quid pro quo they gave him the Chief Ministership even though numerically his strength was not even half that of the Janata. This remained a sore point with the Janata members throughout the troubled co-existence of the two within the boundaries of the Progressive Democratic Front. Mr Pawar also lost his Chief Ministership overnight, when a midnight message informed him that the Assembly had been dissolved and the state was under President's rule.

With the Assembly elections in sight Mr Pawar is now making a desperate bid to return to power. And

so the onion came to his rescue like it did less than two months ago, in the case of the Congress (I), in fact this portly tuber was said to have been responsible to a large extent for the victory of the Congress (I). Mr Pawar decided to grab the onion by its peels and rushed off to Pune, the silky onion belt which with Nasik produces 60,000 tonnes of onions annually. Maharashtra produces about 1.2 million tonnes of onions of the country's 18 million tonnes output.

For the last month the people of Nasik and Pune, politically conscious areas of the state, have been agitating for higher prices for growers. Led by Sharad Joshi, a former United Nations official, under the banner of the Shetkari Sanghatana about 6,000 onion growers blocked traffic on the Bombay-Pune and Nasik highway to highlight their demands. Their immediate demand was for resumption of exports in order to shore up the prices of onions and also that NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation) should buy onions at higher prices. As the onion farmers say, when crops are good we suffer, and when crops are poor we suffer. Last year there was a drought throughout the onion-growing world like Spain and Israel, onions were sold in Europe for as high as £5 per kg when India exported onions for as much as Rs 240 a quintal and farmers made a packet. The Government clamped down on exports after the consumers in the international market raised a hue and cry over the soaring prices of onions and onion-growers felt that if exports were continued they could have made enough money to last them for the latter lean years. The present crisis is a recurring one as there are two crops in February and March and a glut in the market. Onion-growers always face problems of prices going down at this time and have to resort to distress selling as the quality of February-March crop is poor and their shelf life is very short. NAFED, however, was not authorised to give higher prices, hence the agitation.

The point, however, is not the jus-

ification for the onion growers' agitation. The point is that the former Chief Minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, who hails from the Pune onion belt jumped hastily onto their bandwagon joining in the agitation for higher prices. Mr Pawar has in the past never bothered about growers selling their produce at distress prices. Last Diwali the grass-growers of Maharashtra's tribal areas of Palghar and Dahanu had to sell their grass at throwaway prices because the Tribal Development Corporation claimed it was not ready to procure the grass. The grass-growers would have got good prices for their grass as there was a severe drought. On the borders of Gujarat, grass Gujarat, grass fetched around Rs 100 to Rs 200 a bundle. The grass-traders formed a cartel and bought grass from the tribals at Rs 60 per bundle

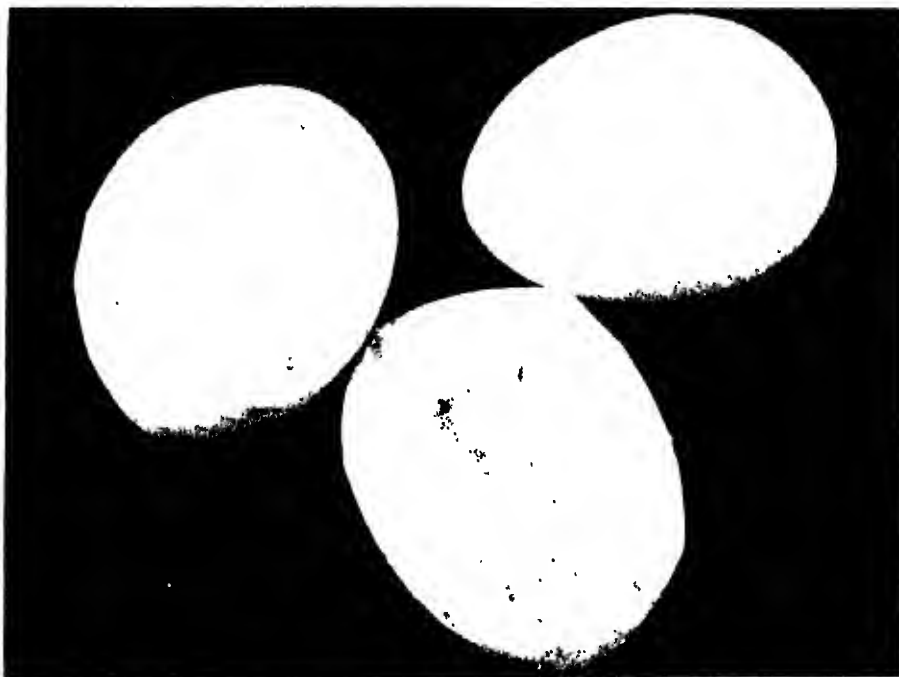
and made large profits. This plight of the tribals was brought to the notice of the Pawar Government but no one bothered, least of all Mr Pawar.

He felt there was not much scope for making political capital out of the miseries of the tribals who are not as vocal or conscious as the onion-growers of Pune and Nasik are. Now the situation is different and Mr Pawar needs the people. The onion agitation is his second agitation. He undertook the first soon after the Assembly was dissolved. He took a deputation (that arrived in cars before the porch of the Mantralaya) to the Governor demanding the implementation of his government's decision for giving debt relief to nearly eight lakh farmers at the cost of Rs 50 crores.

OLGA TELLIS, Bombay

Touched by the sun

Does an eclipse affect living organisms?



Eclipse-affected eggs

ALL the eye-pain complaints examined by Dr. Jennifer Vaid Basaiawmoit at Shillong Civil Hospital after the February 16 solar eclipse were more psychological than real. Ophthalmoscopic tests had shown negative results with no retinal spots the exposure of the eyes to the sun was expected to leave. But on February 22, when I met the eye specialist at the hospital gate for the first time, she opened, without much introduction, the egggy subject. Sitting beside me in the jeep Dr. Basaiawmoit explained to me by drawing with one finger on her left palm the way a hen's egg had shown, perhaps the world's first embryonic

evidence, of the effects of the solar eclipse on the living.

"I was fascinated and awed all at once when at home, on February 18, my attention was drawn to particularly one egg, bearing not the eclipse but the sun itself, as it would seem on the hard shell", said the young ophthalmologist.

That afternoon Dr. Jennifer, two veterinary doctors and I, were talking over what should now certainly be called "the primate" among the hen eggs to have shown clear effects of the solar eclipse on the egg-shell. One of the officers from the Government Veterinary Department suggested a possible calcium deficiency

in the local red Rhode Island mother hen to have produced on the egg shell the unusual image, a murky roundish shadow with an embossed girdle. Etched tiny lines interposed the embossed edges of the coronal girdle as, Dr. Jennifer said, a child would attempt to draw rays of a rising sun.

But the veterinary doctors could not say for sure whether the rays emitted by the sun before, during or after an eclipse could cause such a deficiency in the hen resulting in the embryonic distortion. They, however, conceded that they had never before seen the kind of image imprinted on an egg. Dr. Vaid-Basaiawmoit who has done her M. D. in Ophthalmology from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, is too well aware of the effects of a solar eclipse on the human eye. According to her, the egg is a poser for scientists trying to break into the Indian myths of the effects of a solar eclipse on the human embryo. This particular egg, she says, was noticed on February 18, barely two days after the eclipse which covered ninety per cent of the sun's face in the Shillong skies. Within six days of the eclipse the boy who took care of this particular hen found two more eggs

The Doctor's household has a scattering of white Leghorns, Black Minorca and Plymouth Rock mother birds none of these birds was affected. The February 18 eggshell also bears, on its narrower side, some spiralling lines converging at a point.

Although, the Doctor does not remember the chronology of the layings she is sure that either the hen did not lay on February 16, 19 and 20, or the eggs were lost. Another egg laid on an unspecified date but said to be bearing the same signs was served as an one-letter to one of the members of the family. The householders refuse to say who ate that egg. It was served unknowingly. Eating such an egg is not taboo in the Khasi society. But looking directly at the eclipse is.

The hen has not continued laying since February 20. A fourth egg found on February 23 is unusually elongated. But for its elongated shape it looks like a duck's egg, a bit bigger than a hen's egg. The largeness could be attributed to the not very unusual phenomenon of a double-yolked egg. Dr. Vaid Basaiawmoit perhaps rightly feels sore about the reticence and indifference of scientists of various disciplines based in numerous scientific institutions at Shillong for not having shown enough interest in the scientific study of the affected egg. The egg only became a show-piece for the household. Some Meghalaya Ministers came to see it, though. At best it was a curio for the children of the locality. When I met Dr. Jennifer, she said, her husband, Haridyas Vaid wanted to take the eggs to the veterinary college in Gauhati. Perhaps all the world's scientists who travelled to India for the eclipse, left a little too soon.

S. K. HANDA, Shillong

Advocate of a poor theatre

Jerzy Grotowski visits rural Bengal



Salim Paul

WHAT was a tall, bearded, internationally-renowned figure of the modern European theatre world doing in a picturesque village in West Bengal? The iconoclastic maverick from Poland who conducted a workshop from 16th and 22nd February at Kenduli, on the banks of the river, Ajay in district Birbhum (about 170 kms from Calcutta), with a motley group of 19 people—which included Europeans, a well-built man from Haiti and a couple of Baul singers—was none other than Jerzy Grotowski, a publicity-shy individual who kept his visit to India a top secret and refused to meet journalists in Calcutta and Bombay. In fact, a Press conference which was to have been held by him on 23rd February at Calcutta was abruptly cancelled since he was feeling unwell.

Grotowski's reticence to meet pressmen apparently stems from the fact that he does not want to be considered a "cult figure" of modern European theatre over the past 20 years. Since the early 1970s, he has consistently moved away from the world of theatre and has spoken about the death of words like theatre, performance, spectator and actor. Despite Grotowski's present endeavour to sever all connections with the modern theatre movement and despite few written works, his name continues to strike a reverential note in the minds of the European avant-garde.

Like Goddard, the French film director who broke all the "rules" of cinema in the early 1960s, Grotowski

revolutionised theatre in Poland by advocating his concept of "poor theatre"—theatre without makeup, props and other appurtenances of technology. In his *Towards a Poor Theatre*, Grotowski acknowledged his indebtedness to French playwright, Antoin Artaud, who spoke of theatre facing its double, the world; theatre through its "cruelty" would reveal the cruelty of the world. The actor's expression was only a mask: the better the actor, the better the mask.

By the end of the 1960s, Grotowski conceived theatre as a phase of annihilation and rebirth from the spirit of "poor theatre". All the while he was trying to liberate theatre from the superficial mass media culture of TV and cinema. In the early 1970s, however, Grotowski gave up all his experiments in the sphere of theatre production and commenced his transcultural explorations into word-transcended natures of communication. His has been a journey from theatre to the roots of culture and essential modes of communication and perception.

Always on the move, Grotowski has travelled to far corners of the globe. He visited the Peking Opera before the Cultural Revolution. This is not his first visit to Bengal or India; he has visited this country six times and has worked with Kathakali dancers in the South. When not travelling, Grotowski lives alone in a small flat off Warsaw. The son of a Pyodor nobleman, he considers himself to be a Marxist and is held in high esteem by the Polish ruling Party.

Grotowski's Theatre of Sources will start in mid-1980, around the time when the second International Theatre Meeting takes place in Poland. Six people, including a Baul will leave Calcutta shortly for Poland. Among the people who are likely to leave from Bombay is actor, Nasiruddin Shah.

Despite ill-health, Grotowski roughed it out in rural Bengal eating the frugal meals of ordinary villagers. (Otherwise, he survives on coffee, milk, eggs, cigarettes and liquor, in that order). According to a participant in Grotowski's workshop, Deepak Majumdar, Studies Coordinator at Chitrabani, a centre for studies in social communication in Calcutta, Grotowski was extremely well-informed on matters pertaining to the "ethnological roots of pan-Indian histrionics" and was very interested in learning about Ramakrishna's modes of religious communication as well as the economic situation of agrarian Bengal.

Along with Grotowski came a Haitian, a Pole, two Frenchmen and a West German girl. For six days, 19 people attended the Kenduli workshop, among them being Ramananda Das Baul, a present-day legend among the Bauls, his daughter, Chhayarani Dasi, another Baul, Gour Khepa, and other participants from Bengal. Majumdar, who is oath-bound not to reveal details ("Grotowski thrives on enigma"), speaks of Grotowski's interest in the organic growth of human communication: "He is intensely involved in studying rituals, customs, music, meetings, postures of people and man's relationship with the elements. When he sees a Muslim performing namaaz he will speak of man's relationship with the sun and, as a modern scientific man, will also remark on the need to develop solar energy."

Majumdar says that silence played a very important part in Grotowski's workshop. "It was not meditation or Zen—there was a lot of physical movement and yet, it was not "physical" or "environmental" theatre. It was also not a psychosomatic experience like yoga. By and large, it attempts to make the participant embark on a sort of pilgrimage, a journey through mythology or, say the *naves of Canterbury Tales*.

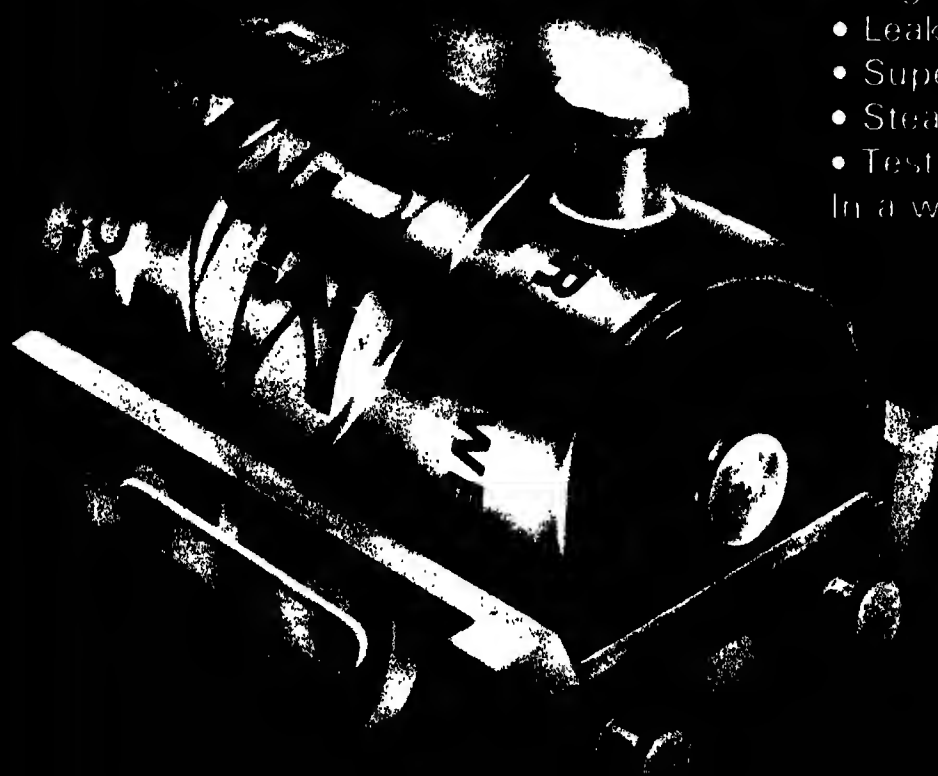
"Grotowski believes in de-conditioning modern human responses in a scientific manner and reviving certain 'essential' elements of traditional and religious modes of communication. It is an 'opus flow' or work theory to aid human development and increase 'human holiness'. For instance, he believes in the *guru-shishya* relationship," says Majumdar.

Only when the Indian participants return from Poland, will we perhaps know to what extent they have been enriched by their experience. Was it something worthwhile and meaningful for them? Or will it just be a curiosity item for disinterested Westerners?

PARANJOY GUHA THAKURTA,
Calcutta

Super power

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BATTERIES – stronger for longer



SPECIAL REPORT

BOMBAY, particularly its suburbs, registers almost one rape case a day," say Meera Saveria of the Forum Against Rape in Malvani off Malad. Hundreds of citizens took a morcha to the Malad police station to protest against the rape of a tenth standard girl who was on her way to Church at six o'clock in the morning with her classmate. Two men who were part of a thieving gang were arrested. In Vakola, another girl was raped while going to collect milk early in the morning. And so on "the stories of rape are endless, now that we have established a forum. Parents are coming to us for help," says Meera. Conditions in the suburbs are conducive to rape. Molestation and other crimes due to various factors and the Bombay Municipal Corporation and the police aren't doing all they can to stop it. They are all so concerned with the elite of this city that the millions of poor have to fend for themselves. For instance in Goregaon, which has a population of over two lakhs, there is only one police station and not even an outpost besides this. The police are reportedly even reluctant to take down offences and once ex-MP Mrinal Gore led a morcha to the police station in order to put a



Biswanath Sarker

huge lock on its door as the residents of Goregaon felt it would be safer without that one police station.

In Bandra East the situation is equally bad. It has one of the longest railway bridges which has different levels and any woman using this bridge does so at her own risk. It is very badly lit and most of the times the lights don't work. This is where the Municipal Corporation comes in. In the Marine Drive, Colaba or Mantralaya areas if even a single light goes off, a BEST mobile ladder comes as soon as possible and puts the light in order again but in Bandra and the rest of the suburbs the roads are very poorly lit. The tableas (stables at Jogeshwar and the industrial belt) are other fatal areas for women. Immigrant labour, predominantly male; are on the prowl making life miserable for women who dare go out alone.

According to suburbanites the police take cognisance of offences only when they feel that the complaining party is in a position to raise a protest if no action is taken. Otherwise they don't bother and even advise people not to make complaints. In one case, Veena, who was waiting a few yards from where her husband was buying eatables from a vendor,

Women against rape

OLGA TELLIS from Bombay and SAUMITRA BANERJEE from Delhi report on how Indian women are fighting against outrages on them

A mock rape at Shivaji Park, Delhi

Raghu Rai



was grabbed by a man. She managed to escape and when her husband came to her rescue he vanished with the help of his gang who created a mild commotion. Veena and her husband went to the police to make a complaint but the police told them to forget it. It would not be possible to find the culprit. Her husband then told a journalist friend who mentioned the incident to the then Chief Minister at a Press conference. The Chief Minister acted immediately and in no time the police found the culprit. Veena later identified the culprit in an identification parade. This showed that the police know exactly who are the eve-teasers and potential rapists once they are told the area where the incident took place. But they act only when they are forced to.

The forum against rape is making women more aware of their rights and where they can go for justice. March 8, which was International Women's Day, was used to highlight the increasing incidence of rape, particularly against economically backward women. Incidences of rape among adivasi women in Maharashtra's tribal belts has been almost a tradition but now that they are organised, rapists will have to think twice before letting themselves loose. For instance, on March 8, 1,500 tribal women from Dahanu Talasari taluka in Thane district walked several hours to demonstrate before the office of the tehsildar and then later at the police station. They demanded the opening of the Mathura case, in which a 16-year-old girl was raped by policemen. The Bombay High Court pronounced the policemen guilty of criminal assault and sentenced the policemen to varying jail terms. The Supreme Court later reversed this judgment and pronounced them innocent. The women spoke about rape in their own lives by the police, contractors, moneylenders, Government servants and shopkeepers.

A rape case which has created a fresh outcry in the state is that of 25-year-old Manjula, a six-months pregnant adivasi woman from Chahade, a village 6 km from Palghar. On the morning of February 20 after she had been to a doctor for a check up she was walking to her village. But she never returned and her dead body was found the next day at an isolated spot 2 km from Palghar. Her body was naked and so inhumanly mauled that a city newspaper did not have the heart to print the picture. The light blue sari she was wearing was tied around her neck to strangle her. As the Forum Against Rape said, "her private parts, the inside of her thighs and stomach bore injuries. Her back, forearms and thighs were badly bruised and crusted with dirt and blood. The place of death bore marks of struggle. Three empty bottles of brandy were found near the dead body. Medical reports found abnormally large quantities of semen in her body. It is nearly a month since the gruesome incident but the Palghar police jamadar, Yeshwant,



Ahilya Rangnekar addressing the Forum against Rape

investigating the case under the supervision of deputy superintendent of police, Mr. Deshpande, has been unable to trace the rapists and murderers. They are obviously rich people because the poor cannot afford three and a half pints of brandy which sells at Rs 32 a pint (minimum).

The Forum Against Rape aims to unite women from all over Maharashtra to fight rape. They ask defiantly: "Will you be one of the 800 cases reported in Bombay in one year and have the courage to say 'I was raped'? Or will you be one of the 8,000 others, for to every reported rape there are 10-12 unreported ones".

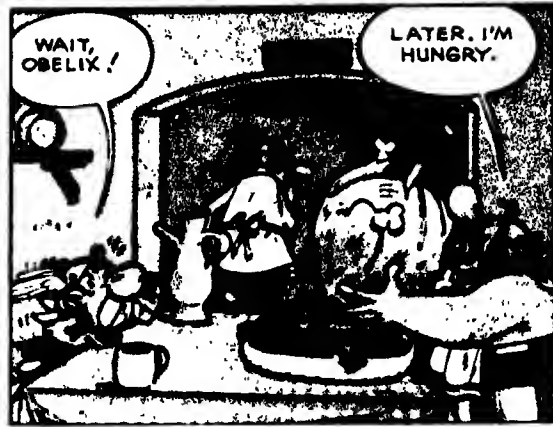
WITH cries of 'Nari ekta aayegi, atyachar mitayegi' and placards bearing slogans like "Women are no objects of pleasure" and "Reopen the Mathura rape case" women from the National Federation of Indian Women, Stree Sangharsh Samity, a group from Jawaharlal Nehru University and various others from the neighbouring villages launched a campaign on March 17 in Delhi for the reopening of the Mathura rape case.

On March 22, 1972, Mathura, a minor girl of around 16 years of age was allegedly raped by a constable Ganpat and molested by another constable of the Dessaijunj police station in Maharashtra. The same day an FIR was filed and a doctor examined Mathura. He found that there were no injuries on Mathura's person and no semen was found in the sample of public hair and vaginal smear stain which were sent for examination.

Semen was however detected on her clothes and on the constable's pyjamas. The case went to the sessions court. Ganpat's lawyer argued that since no injuries were found on Mathura and since she was under no fear in the police station, it was sexual intercourse with her consent and not rape.

The sessions judge declared that Ganpat was not guilty, but accepted the probability of sexual intercourse between Ganpat and Mathura. The judge also concluded that semen on both Ganpat and Mathura's clothes was not proof enough of sexual intercourse between them. They could possibly have had sexual intercourse with different people.

The High Court however reversed the sessions court decision and it came to the conclusion that the sexual intercourse was forcible and that it amounted to rape. In its judgement it said: "The sessions judge erred in not appreciating the difference between consent and passive submission... Mere passive or helpless surrender of the body and its resignation to the other's lust cannot be equated with desire or will nor can one furnish an answer by the mere fact that the sexual act was not in opposition to such desire or volition". Thus the High Court found Ganpat guilty of rape and sentenced him to five years' rigorous imprisonment. The case went up to the Supreme Court and it reversed the decision of the High Court in 1979. It declared that Ganpat was not guilty and he was set free. The Supreme Court accepted the contention of Ganpat's lawyers that Mathura was not subjected to any fear that could compel her to passive submission. Besides, the





Procession against rape on International Women's Day

absence of any marks on her body was seen by the Supreme Court as proof that the "intercourse was a peaceful affair and that the story of stiff resistance having been put up by the girl is false".

In a letter presented to the Chief Justice of India by the president of the National Federation of Indian Women, Aruna Asaf Ali, it was said: "It is deplorable that the Supreme Court not only failed to punish the guilty but gave legal sanctity to an utterly immoral and illegal act of the public servants as no strictures against their conduct were passed by the Supreme Court. It is distressing to note that even under the British rulers in India murderers and dacoits were entitled to greater security than given by the highest court in free India to women raped in police stations...extorted confessions in police stations are liable to heavy punishment, but the crime of rape of a helpless woman in a police station is sanctified by the highest court in free India as an intercourse with the possible consent of the victim...We therefore urge that the case be reopened and referred to a larger bench". The crowd of people which had gathered in front of the Supreme Court on the morning of March 17, did not include only women. There were men too who were protesting against the ill-treatment met-

ed out to women. When the letter was presented to the Chief Justice, Mr Chandrachud advised the delegation to take steps to voice their grievances as were open to them under the law, while groups of people assembled outside the Supreme Court and chanted: "Supreme Court hai, hai". Srid Nanbibi, a villager who had come from Shahidnagar: "It is about time that some action was taken against the atrocities committed on us poor women. There are hundreds of Mathuras in this country."

This was not the only instance of women in Delhi protesting against rape. On March 8, International Women's Day, about a thousand women went in procession from the Shivaji Park to Gandhi Maidan in protest against rape. They demanded the reopening of the Mathura case, change of rape laws, implementation of section 160(1) CRP, that more women should be inducted into the police force, and that the state be made responsible for reintegrating rape victims and aiding them to become economically independent.

One interesting feature in both demonstrations were the street plays which were staged by the Jana Natya Manch and the Stree Sangharsh Samiti. The plays focussed on the evils of the dowry system and the plight of rape victims. They showed

how in India, it is the woman who is blamed and excommunicated from society for the atrocities committed by men. As a participant in the demonstration commented: "It is the men who give women a raw deal but it is ultimately the women who are blamed and who suffer. On International Women's Day, this is something we intend to focus on".

Section 375 of the IPC says that "a man is said to have committed rape who...has sexual intercourse with a woman under circumstances falling under any of the following descriptions: firstly, against her will. Secondly, without her consent. Thirdly, with her consent, when her consent has been obtained by putting her in fear of death or of hurt...fourthly, with or without her consent when she is under 16 years of age..." But there are certain anomalies in regard to this law. For, there are a lot of instances where the victim is threatened but this threat is not proved. For example, in the Mathura rape case, there were no injuries on the body of Mathura and therefore it could not be proved that she could have been under any threat. Again, there have been cases where under threat of injury to a near and dear one the victim has been subjected to rape. Besides, the desire of the woman and her aversion to the Act are not taken into account under the law.

KHAAS BAAT

AGE may not have yet caught up with the Helen of yore. Her face is still unwrinkled: she takes great care and uses gram-flour, cream and turmeric etc. But she is turning flabby; where once she used to have the slim-mest waist and trimmest hips, there are unabashed bulges now. Even through her sedate blouse and a tight-skirt, a paunch and bulging hips were clearly visible when she was recently doing the vamp's role for a big movie. Where is the Helen of the skimpy netted attire, who did not need to be kidded by everyone around that she had lost weight since they saw her last?

TALKING of Hindi film actresses flipping for cricketers, I suddenly remembered this woman. Not that you can call Chaitali, (who used to be a member of Premnath's entourage, and who now calls herself Chaitali Dutt) a female star—for one has never heard of or seen her movies, but she trails the Bombay film-party circuit all the same. This time she went a step further in her bid to attract the cameras and hooked her self onto English cricketer John Lever. She is supposed to be engaged to him—there goes Lever! Look what happened to the Pakistani cricketers when they were chasing the Indian girls—their work suffered! On the other hand, this may just be an impulsive exercise which might never culminate in marriage. This reminds me of Zahira Asha Sachdev and their *pardesi* boyfriends! The romance of film actresses with Pakistani cricketers did not have the filmi touch. The playboys played their own game and the women were left staring.

THE set of *Naseeb* was certainly something to see. One of director Manmohan Desai's fantasy-ridden scenes was on and one could see the excitement in the air. Security guards stood at the entrance. Inside was a huge round revolving floor with and artistes seated at them. Amitabh and Hema

could be seen in outlandish Spanish costumes. Reena Roy and Shatrughun Sinha were doing a Cossack dance. And there was Pran in a silvery-white beard and hair. Watching them were the smaller stars. Wonder why Reena Roy did not

Helen



even once look in the direction of Shatru when not giving her shots, or why they were sitting at a far distance from each other? Shatru actually claimed that far from keeping quiet, Reena was becoming too chirpy these days. Maybe she was behaving this way with the approaching date of Shatru's marriage!

THE aftermath of Babi's exit from films is somewhat like this. What the producers might have wanted to do to her, they are doing to her in their films, forcibly! Killing her! What other way can one justify the mysterious disappearance of one of the principal characters from the films, other than referring to her as being dead? Such are the plans of Manoj Kumar for Kranti who in any case enjoys killing his heroines. But can Kamal Amrohi change history by killing her mid-

way in *Razia Sultan*, a prestigious film? Unless wants to become a legend by altering history! To others who can't make her die in their films, are mentally planning execution!

IF indications are to be believed, then Shal Samanta's *Khwab* which slated for release soon going to be a hit film—the songs are already

Reena Roy: hurt flirt



Amitabh: A matter of Naseeb

Shivranjan Guivady



H R Nagray

KHAAS BAAT

JAYABHARATHY the ageing sex-bomb of Malayalam films plays a nymphomaniac in *Chandra Bimbam*, the up-coming film directed by N. Sankaran Nair. "The sex scenes are not really up to the mark" confessed one of the unit members. Nair has directed quite a few sensational films like *A night in a Rest House* and *Tamburatti*. In fact, he feels that people are rather tired of sex oriented films. He won't mind cutting a few scenes if the film can obtain a "U" certificate. The Malayalam industry feels that many of its soft porno films have frightened the authorities in the Gulf countries. As a result some of these films were subjected to severe censorship. And at home in Kerala, sentimental dramas seem

Rajani Sharma

to be enjoying a revival right now.

Chandra Bimbam stars *Soman*, *Pratap Pothen* and *Sathar*, the last named being Jayabharathy's husband. It was during the shooting of this film that Jayabharathy's clandestine romance with *Sathar* surfaced and they got married leaving her ex-lover *Pothen* in the lurch. *Pothen* who was in the dumps for many months (a couple of his films flopped just as his mistress walked out on him) is now alive, happy and kicking. *Thakara* which he distributed in Kerala was an excellent hit.

SARAT Babu plays an impotent husband in *Megathukum Thagum Vunau*, a film being produced by P. S. Veerappa, ace villain of vestervears. Bombay's *Rajni Sharma* plays his heroine. But the film isn't one of those stories which show the frustrated wife running away with the milk man or doing "it" with the temple priest. This is a story of separation and sacrifice, amne-

RAJANI Sharma's extraordinary luck has saved his fourth film *Chinna Chinnu Vundu Katti* from being a total flop. Except *Sudhakar*, the film has no big stars and its low budget investment has also helped this weak, insipid film from crashing immediately.

ULLASA Paravaigal which opened so well is limping despite 'phoren' locations, *Rathi*

Agnihotri's hot pants and a bespectacled *Kamalahasan*. Director C. V. Rajendran who returned to Tamil films after many successful Kannada ventures to his credit is naturally disappointed with the mild box-office success of *Ullasa*.

"**OLD is gold**": posters of old MGR films resurrected for re-release proclaim in English. Hope *Latha* has seen the posters.

sia and attempted suicide with sumptuous religious sentiments thrown in.

Rajni seems to have impressed her producer: he's casting her opposite *Sarat Babu* in his next film.

As *Megathukum ...* is being released, another Tamil film of *Rajni*, *Kashmir Kathali* (opposite *Raikumar*, *Latha's* brother) is also making brisk progress.

THERE'S a strong whispering campaign going against popular Malayalam star *Soman*. Is it true that some producers have shown him the "exit" sign while blaming him of being incorrigibly uncooperative? Personally this columnist

feels that every busy actor goes through a period of tension and loneliness, and sooner or later, they bounce back. And it isn't as if *Soman* is hibernating: he has at least a dozen films on the floor.

Down South, film directors and producers are very fond of displaying university degrees, and sobriquet stage-managed through clubs of sycophants politely known as manrams (fan clubs). Stars go around instigating universities to grant them honorary doctorates. But *Talluri Krishnakumar* whose first film *Ointi Bagotham* in Telugu awaits early release, is a medical doctor and though she wasn't quite willing her producers proudly billed her as Dr *Krishnakumari*.

The *Lakshmi-Jai Shankar* *Srikant* starrer *Dhairya Lakshmi* didn't do well in Tamil, but its Kannada version with *Lakshmi* and *Anant Naq* also called *Dhairya Lakshmi* has done rather well. Which means that *Lakshmi-Nag* team is quite a crowd pulling factor as was evident in previous hits like *Chandanada Goobe*.

WITH so many of MGR's celluloid companions and staunch loyalists giving him up, one needn't be surprised if *Latha* too wants to declare her independence. But not before income tax officials unraveled "the mystery behind the collection of Rs. seven lakhs for a dance-drama by *Latha*". It is alleged that the money was collected from "donors" through a dance drama called *Sakuntala* and handed over to MGR who used it for election purposes. The matter was even raised in the Parliament.

Rathi Agnihotri



Tapas Roy



LIVING

'Lord' Krishna

"Jesus Haly Christ, you know, I said to them, either you just write another in your lousy series or you decide here and now to improve. To do something for yourselves, you know, for the 90 million people you have watching your cinema, you know." The speaker was none other than Krishna Shah in a very superior mood during a brief visit to Bombay, when he deigned to comment on the work of his fellow directors here in India. Naturally, but naturally, he considers that they are all a class below him. "I'm just on holiday," said the director of the superflop *Shalimar*. "It has a techni-

cal perfection, you know, that Indian cinema has not seen in the last 50 years". But surely, pointed out Ashish Rajadhyaksha, a film produced now will obviously have a greater degree of technical perfection than one produced 50 years earlier. "Um..." was the only reply. "I'm an established director, you know," said Shah, back once more on what must be his favourite topic—himself. "I've made many films, you know." Shah, who began his career as a stage director on Broadway with the production *The River Niger*, says that theatre was a phase which, for him, is forever closed. "It has stunted my

perspective, you know. I regret having got onto the stage." On the Indian star system. "They are going to have to do something about it, you know. For the time being Indian film makers are the gutsiest, the bravest people in the world. There is a celebration of life, you know, a certain panache that is nowhere in the world. But the way things are going, something will have to give. Things can't really continue like this, you know." A wonderful analysis, Mr. Shah, but do you have any remedies? After all, you can't really afford to preach, you know.

All's fair

Ever since Job Charnock founded the city, Calcuttans have been enamoured of fish. Then, with the passage of time, they added to their list of favourites, soccer, Rabindrasangeet and cricket, in that order of time. The latest addition to that list is book fairs, the current craze in the city. The first Calcutta book fair was organised only five years ago by the Publishers' and Booksellers' Guild and the initial response was simply overwhelming. This year's fair was held opposite the stately Rabindra Sadan and despite the heat, attendance was fairly good. Streams of book lovers meandered through the stalls which displayed the wares of nearly 2,000 publishers. "Nothing can keep us away from this superb collection of books. It's almost like an annual date," a beautiful young collegian told S. N. M. Abdi at the fair grounds. "Last year I came to the book fair every single day and this year I intend to do the same," she said with a smile. This year the organisers pitched their tents over a larger area so that lovers—of books or otherwise—could spend a few quiet minutes near the fountain or at the India Coffee House counter discussing the latest poetry collections.

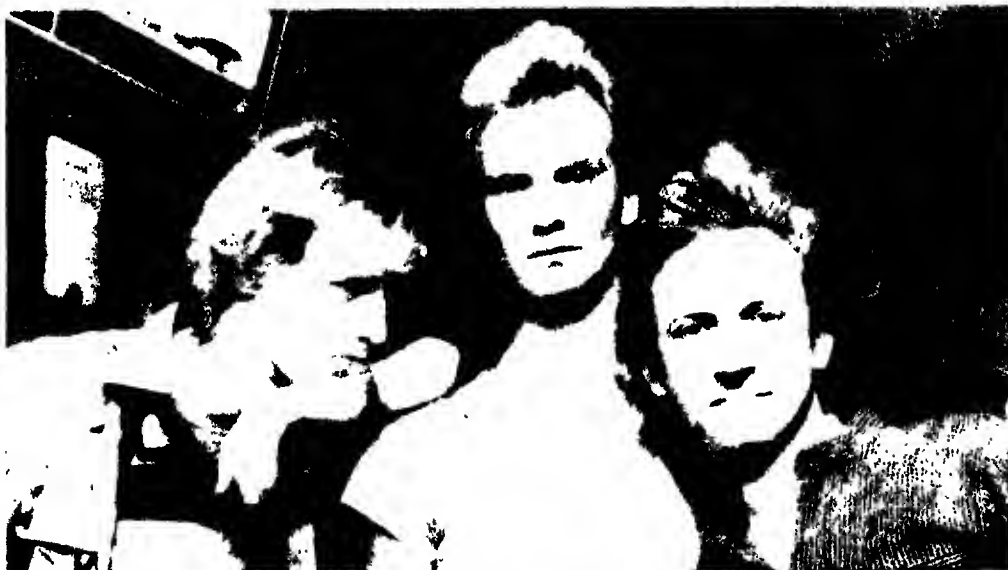
Scotch-and-soda socialism

The invitation itself was intriguing. "To mobilise a positive and purposeful mass opinion committed to the growth and progress of the Indian film industry vis-a-vis the present Government, we, the undersigned, inaugurate the Nehru Vichar Manch." The list of signatories was certainly impressive. There were practically all the big-time film producers and even Asha Parekh for good measure. The poolside inauguration at the Poonam International was altogether another story, however. There

were no signs at all of the hosts; at 6.30 the drinks emerged and by 7.30—an hour and a half after the scheduled start—the journalists, hangers-on and some others were totally committed to their drinks. Finally, after they had been given up for lost, Shakti Samanta, Prakash Mehra (*uchh sab kya hai?*), Rajkumar Kohli, Mohan Segal and others gathered at the dais and the whole thing degenerated into a farce. "It is the Government that is a parasite," shouted one pro-

ducer. "They are trying to put us out of business," howled another. The Nehru Vichar Manch was started said one, to be a forum on vital issues concerning the commercial cinema. Well, why choose Nehru? "Er, because Nehru was a great leader." The evening didn't go very well. As shadows lengthened and inebriation levels escalated, the All India Socialist Democratic Forum was dissolved in the liquor, which was flowing pretty freely by then.

Open up—it's the cops



The Police from left to right; Stewart Copeland, Sting, Andy Summers

There haven't been many of them, but when they do come, people flock to hear the foreign rock groups. Remember Led Zeppelin? They arrived unannounced at the Slip Disc and gave the patrons a memorable evening. Next on the line, after Magna Carta, that is, appears to be the group The Police. It is, by all indications, a sensational band. For a start, it is the only group that has had two albums in the last year going triple platinum (£ 3 million) in England, double platinum in Holland and a whole host of other successes. Gordon Summers, the bass guitarist and lead vocalist (better known as Sting) emphasises the fact that they are not "punk". "We do have long hair but our music is not with it. We take ourselves more seriously than just pop heroes."



Bout Guna

Canvassing for Mother

Doing something beautiful for God. And Mother Teresa would agree with 65-year-old painter Maqbool Fida Husain. Barefoot and clad in a pair of suede trousers and black shirt, the famous painter was at the Tata Centre, Calcutta, on March 17 to inaugurate a series of his paintings on Mother Teresa, which he called "A tribute to the greatest humanist of our time". According to Husain he has tried to express in his own language, the deeply moving experience he felt when he came in contact with Mother. Painted in a new medium, acrylic, his works on Mother are symbolic and are based on the universal theme of "mother and child". The characters in the paintings have no faces, however, and the only way they can be

identified as the Missionaries of Charity is by their blue-bordered saris. The paintings will be exhibited in India and around the world before they are preserved in an Indian museum. For all admirers of Mother and Husain alike there is one painting which has been silk-screen printed, copies of which were being sold for Rs. 300 each. Altogether 300 such prints were to be sold, the proceeds of which would go to Mother. What inspired Husain to choose Mother Teresa as his subject? He explained to Tirthankar Ghosh that he had lost his own mother at a very early age and when he first set eyes on Mother, it evoked memories of her. He had also written a few lines on her which had been exhibited.



Bout Guna

Magic stirrups

In an age of petulance, empty bravado, misbehaviour and tantrums, M. Jagdish, jockey extraordinary, is a pleasant exception. His riding career began 38 years ago. Do we hear you say he must be pretty old then? Yes, he is, but one certainly wouldn't think so to look at him. He shows no signs at all of balding, and his light frame shows no signs of flab. Since his first ride in 1942, he has performed with honour and distinction alike, bringing home a record 1500 winners, including 61 "classics" under his belt. Though he is India's first millionaire jockey, he has certainly not allowed success to go to his head and at a trim 50 kilos, looks as fit as any of his younger colleagues.

When encountered in the grey dawn of a misty Calcutta morning as he trained for the Invitation Cup, the jockey told Tapan Chaki that the best moment of his life came when, riding Own Opinion, he had beaten Royal Tern to win the Indian Invitation. And the best horse he has ever ridden? Squander, without a doubt. He has no plans to retire yet. "As long as I can show good results, I will continue to ride. Age will be no bar." And he certainly looks good for years to come.

Bout Guna

Top scorer



Every cricket correspondent worth his salt in this country should know who Abdur Rahman is. The short, plump and ever-smiling employee of the Eastern Railway is a scorer who makes it a point to be present at all Test matches on Indian soil. One of the most popular personalities in the Press Box, he has a wide grin and a greeting for everyone, whether they need him or not. And, what is more important, everyone in the Press Box loves him.

Being a railway employee, he gets a train pass to most centres, while the journalists themselves always pass the hat around to compensate his out-of-pocket expenses. Rahman, 32, says, "In the beginning I wanted to be a cricketer for a club side in Calcutta. But then someone advised me that it

would be a difficult task so I was very dejected. Since I was interested in the game I took to scoring instead and as of today I have scored nearly 30 Tests". During the recent Jubilee Test the visiting English journalists renewed their friendship with the effervescent scorer whom they had first met in 1972. As a measure of their appreciation, John Woodcock, that doyen of cricket writers, suggested to his colleagues that they present an autographed 1979 edition of Wisden to Rahman for his services. One of the more original inscriptions was that of John Thirknesse: "What was that you said, you bloody fool?" And it was a measure of the esteem in which he holds Rahman that he wrote it with a smile on his face, adds Haresh Munwani.

Azad thinker

The nasal tone and the Kashmiri accent are clearly audible when you meet Jagan Nath Azad who is currently head of the department of Urdu at Jammu University and loves speaking the Urdu language. His own place in Urdu literature is unquestionable: 35 books to an author's credit is surely no joke.

S. N. M. Abdi spoke to Azad when he was recently in Calcutta on his way to Rangoon. "Rangoon is particularly close to my heart because Bahadur Shah 'Zafar' breathed his last there but the immediate reason for my visit is an invitation from a literary organisation, *Bazm-e-shohoraye-Urdu*". In Rangoon, Azad will participate in a mushaira and deliver two lectures on Iqbal and Urdu literature. He describes his visit as a voyage of discovery...to find the kinship of languages.

About Urdu he says: "This language has a future in India. Urdu and Hindi have a lot in common. This similarity has done Urdu irreparable political harm. Hindi has gained throughout". Azad believes that Urdu is more widely understood than Hindi and is more melodious. Can Hindi produce a line like *Sare jahan se achcha Hindoostan hamara*, he asks passionately.

THE WORLD

Deng rules, ok ?



The era of "whateverism" in China is over, that is the philosophy that whatever Mao said was right. Limousines are now carrying top officials to the Great Hall of the People in Beijing and there was much talk, for over a month, about "new promotions and policies". The six-day-long 11th Party Central Committee wound up in the first week of March, bringing about the most far-reaching changes in policies and leadership in its history. The man behind it was Deng Hsiaoping, the twice-rehabilitated Vice-Premier. As life-size hoardings and posters of the Great

Helmsman were being pulled down and removed in the busy city of Canton, the Central Committee's 5th Plenum was in progress in Beijing. The meeting, which was attended by 319 full and alternate members from various parts of the mainland, concluded with a series of resolutions that are to change life in China almost completely: the removal of Maoists from the Politburo who opposed Deng, the elevation of Deng proteges, restoration of the Party's Central Committee, a body which Mao dismantled during the Cultural Revolution, the framing of a new set of "guiding principles for political life within the Party", and the posthumous rehabilitation of the discredited Liu Shao-chi. Surprisingly, the Committee even decided to delete from the country's Constitution the "four big freedoms" — the right to "speak out freely", air their views fully, hold debate and write big-character posters. The move was explained as being meant to "help eliminate factors causing instability".

Poll-axed

Elections to Iran's Majlis, or parliament, held at a time when global efforts to get a large number of American hostages in the country released failed, were likely to be cancelled outright. Iran's President, Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, in a statement after the polls suggested that the elections might be declared invalid if the charges of cheating, of which he said there were many, were proved. He added, however, that he did not believe there had been widespread cheating. Spokesmen of the Muslim Mujahedin, a radical Party, said that elections to at least 30 seats in Teheran itself could be declared void because of large-scale rigging. The main offender, he alleged, was the Islamic Republican Party, which was initially leading in the vote-count. The complaints received relate to voting without proper identification, illegal election-day propa-



ganda and the mishandling of ballot boxes in areas where the voters were largely illiterate. According to a report by the National Front, "the votes are mostly not scrutinised carefully, and the names of candidates who are favoured by the person in charge of the station are read out." A second round of polling is supposed to be held in three weeks wherever the voters have failed to give a clear majority to any candidate.

UN-ethical

Though not quite on the scale of New York and Geneva, the UN establishment at Bangkok is fast becoming a comfortable training centre for Soviet spies. A recent incident at the headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) suggests that Soviet agents step in and out of the headquarters' offices when they please, and pick up handy information. Posts in several UN offices are in fact known to be reserved for certain nations, though the motives in all cases cannot be said to be the same. This arrangement is taken seriously not only by the Soviet Union, but also India and Japan.

Anatoli Dotsenko, an eco-

nomics affairs officer at the ESCAP headquarters' division of industry, housing and technology, was a popular Soviet employee, "not brilliant but always helpful" and "most untypical of the rest of his countrymen", recalled a fellow-employee. On January 28, he told a surprised colleague "I think I'm in a bit of trouble". Two days later, he sent a note to the ESCAP administrative chief Roy Smith saying he was going home because his father was ill. Within hours he emplaned for Moscow. The following weekend two Russians, identified as V. I. Gorskoy and V. Takoev, appeared on the ESCAP premises, went to the industry division and made photocopies of secret documents.

Programmed to fail

In the event of a war between the superpowers, man will do precious little except press the right buttons on computers. In fact, the Pentagon in USA depends too much on computers. Therein lies the rub since they may fail. Some outside experts who have evaluated the Pentagon computers are of this view. This is especially true of the World Wide Military Command and Control System (WIMEX) which has computers at military bases or in underground vaults at 27 sites. The WIMEX could not live up to

its standard during the 1975 operation of freeing the crew of the merchant ship Mayaguez. It was held responsible for the loss of contact between the joint chiefs of staff during the murder of Congressman, Leo Ryan, in Jonestown, Guyana. It is no wonder then that the report prepared by President Carter's Office of Management and Budget stated: "The Defence Department cannot fly a modern aeroplane, assign an officer or issue an item from inventory without using its computer resource".

Plane gain

Bangladesh might be entering into an agreement with a member of the Saudi Arabian royal family, Prince Abdullah, to start a joint airline on terms that seem convenient for her. The Prince is trying to launch a private airline in collaboration with the Bangladesh flag-carrier Biman, in which he shall hold a 75 per cent interest and the Biman 25 per cent. Abdul Mannan, Biman's managing director has made it clear that the new airline will not bear the Bangladesh flag.

Abdullah owns a construction company in Saudi Arabia which imports a large number of workers from various Gulf, African and Asian countries. The new airline will operate charter flights to these countries to bring in workers. He plans to make an initial investment of 65 m US dollars, and place several Boeings he owns at the airline's disposal. Though the new venture will be called Air Bangladesh, the country shall not make any immediate investment in it, and share only the profits.

Just for kicks

"It's hard to describe his ability in terms of other players, but I suppose he's a bit like Ray Hankin—not the quickest, but he puts himself about well. His attitude is that if others get the ball into the box he'll find it. He's 15 stone, six feet plus, very strong, heads with tremendous power, and has useful feet." Thus spake Ron Asham, manager of the lowranking British football club, Scunthorpe United about his latest acquisition, Ian Botham. The brilliant cricketer, back in England after visiting India and Pakistan, made himself available for Scunthorpe's league encounters this season. The club itself does not have much to boast of: it draws thin crowds of 2,000 at best, and ranks 89th in a league of 92. Hopes of a better public response to its ties, if not a better showing, now seem bright. Though his manager thinks he is not as fit as a footballer should be, the England all-rounder might well live up to his name. According to Asham, he has confirmed potential



Nikhil Bhattacharya

as a footballer, and scored the vital goal in a match he played recently for the club's reserves against Doncaster Rovers. To prove money isn't quite all, Botham will be playing 'for kicks'—and nothing in return.

Stepping out of the red

Bolshoi ballet dancers have done it again—defected, that is. Valentina and Leonid Kozlov, the unhappy couple in a Bolshoi troupe which toured America last September, chose not to return to their country. The reasons, says Leonid, are purely artistic. They are fed up with being attached to just one choreographer, and quit what he describes as the best ballet group in the world, in search of variety. Mr. Kozlov had earlier been refused a visa to travel abroad, for which he missed a chance to accom-

pany the group on a previous tour. To add to his disgust, on his current tour, he was even spoken of as the Communist Party man in the ballet troupe. "I am an ordinary man," he affirms, dispelling such fears. Judging by precedent, in spite of global support for Russian dissidents, Leonid and Valentina Kozlov will most likely have difficulty being accepted by American ballet circles. The last Bolshoi artiste who defected, Godunov, was treated with initial suspicion before being accepted by the American Ballet Theatre.

A bit(e) of trouble

Recently, the British Navy courtmartialled one of its mascots at the HMS Osprey in Dorset. The Golden Labrador, Sandy, found himself in deep waters when he put his fangs into the hand of a newspaper boy. On the court martial board there was Commander Ninian Stewart. He heard the facts of the case and gave his judge-

ment: 'the accused was to be confined to the doghouse for a day. Sandy's counsel, however, found the sentence a "bit" to harsh. He pleaded successfully, although the contents of what ... said is one of those closely guarded secrets of Her Majesty's Navy. In the end Sandy was allowed to keep his good conduct badge and rank.

Dogs of war

Behind every human invention, is a story. In the case of chemical and biological warfare, the story is as cruel as the invention itself. A book recently published called *Rage Against the Dying*, by Elizabeth Sigmond, gives instances of how the British Defence Ministry methodically misused the Official Secrets Act to try to dismiss claims of compensation from persons who have physically suffered during experiments on biological and chemical weapons. One of the cases involve Tom Griffiths who was involved in an accident at the chemical defence research establishment in Nancekuke, Cornwall, in 1958. Ms Sigmond says it was not until 1969 that the department of Health and Social Security

agreed to give him a disability pension of £22 a week for "loss of faculty arising from phosphorous poisoning." Griffiths was under pressure of the Secrets Act not to divulge the nature of his work at the Cornwall establishment to his wife Eileen. The book also mentions the case of Mr. Bill Cockayne, who worked for the chemical defence laboratory at Porton Down, Wiltshire. He was similarly refused compensation by the Government even when he claimed he was suffering serious nervous attacks and amnesia because of an accident at the factory in 1964. Mr. Cockayne was allegedly even driven to the point of "committing suicide" by the ingenious technique of brain-washing.

True love, again



She was swathed in a flowing red-and-gold saree, encumbered with a heap of garlands around her neck. He, in contrast, wore a business suit. Both had taken pains to prepare themselves

for this happy occasion — they were going to get married. The ceremony — a freaky Oriental pageant — was to be conducted by an Indian guru, Swami Mukta-nanda Paramhansa at the Regency Siddha Yoga Dham Meditation Center in Miami Beach. The bridegroom was a Japanese singer Akira Fusei, 32 and for a wife he had 27-year-old divorced British actress Olivia Hussey, the breathtaking beauty in "Romeo and Juliet", known for her fondness for Indian gurus. The blessing that was bestowed on the couple by the guru was that they would "live together in love as long as the Sun and Moon shine, as long as the holy mountain stands, surrounded by children and grandchildren." Not like it was between Romeo and Juliet.

Porn free

Spread the word around. Porn power is going to stay in Britain. The Post Office which was recently involved in a lot of controversy over the publication of Prestel, the viewdata system, has stated very emphatically that it has no intention of preventing "dirty book" guides from appearing in Prestel. Dr Alex Reid, the Post Office director did not anticipate any change whatever in the corporation's

policy. This in spite of the fact that no less than Sir William Barlow, Post Office chairman, called for the enquiry into why Prestel carried a guide showing where dirty books could be bought at five Soho shops. Dr Reid has also taken a similar stand on advertisements from "lonely hearts, homosexuals" provided the material did not contravene existing laws. Hey Presto, it's Prestel.

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REVIEW books

Publicans

By SAMAR DUTTA

THERE definitely was corruption in the shape of bribery, nepotism and different types of illegal gratification in pre-independent India, both during the British regime and even prior to that. Yet, corruption in those days did not become as great a problem as it is now. In the post-independence era black money, tax evasion, smuggling, hoarding, blackmarketing, food and medicine adulteration have eaten into the vitals of the country, lowered the moral standards of people and so undermined human values that the chances of establishing an egalitarian welfare state seem remote.

To uproot bribery and corruption the Government of India took steps such as enacting the Prevention of Corruption Act. In fact, the objects and reasons of this act were notified as early as in 1946 in the Gazette of India and the act came into being on March 11, 1947. The act has since been modified from time to time to meet its declared objectives. The book under review principally deals with the various aspects of the act vis-a-vis the misdeeds or corrupt practices of public servants.

The author of the present work is a political commentator and lawyer who served in the Central Civil Service for nearly three decades. He then had the chance of witnessing in person how various kinds of underhand means and corrupt practices were adopted by public servants attached to different echelons of the administration. Against the backdrop of a comprehensive picture of administrative as well as political corruption, the author analyses and annotates the law on corruption as it is placed on the statute book. Part I, in a brief 32 pages, gives a lucid account of the act. Also delineated are the various aspects of the sections and their provisions, together with their inter-connection with the relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code on the basis of which this act has been construed. Particularly interesting is the portion dealing with corruption offences drawn from the IPC which is intertwined with PCA provisions.

Part II deals with the act in detail under a list of 65 subjects. The author holds the governing authorities, irrespective of their political colour, responsible for profaning the civil service. He observes that after three decades of progress under the democratic system corruption has dug roots at the top political levels. Naturally, it inducts the top administrative levels in the operations. Political bosses from coteries, maintain liaison through select, loyal, self-rewarding officials. This is how corruption percolates downwards, from the oligarchy to the bureaucracy, and takes in the giant counterpart pipeline of the industrialist, the importer-exporter, the contractor, the supplier.

The latter part of the volume includes case laws and case histories. A compact appendix supplies the text of the act, along with section-wise annotation, which steers clear of merely being a verbatim reproduction of court orders and judgments, which invariably tend to overlap and become repetitive. Of added interest is the discussion on what the law should be in relation to the Prevention of Corruption Act. The author is of the opinion that the act has proved to be a puerile piece of legislation in spite of its 30 years' actual operation inasmuch as it deals only with the 'general class of public servants, excluding the politicians with or without portfolios. He suggests several useful ways in which our law-makers can catch up with law-breakers and also suitable measures to make this act more effective and prevent its violation.

Corruption and Public Servants by H.L. Mansukhani, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd., Price Rs 75.

Beginning April 6

This week the Sun alone is in Pisces, Venus is in Taurus, Mars, Jupiter and Rahu are in Leo, Saturn is in Virgo, Neptune and Uranus are in Scorpio and Mercury and Ketu are in Aquarius. The Moon will be moving through Sagittarius and Capricorn from Scorpio.



ARIES (March 21 — April 20) The first two days will pose many problems. This could be a difficult and trying period. Safeguard your own health and that of womanfolk in the family. A fair measure of success and happiness can be yours if indiscretion and extravagance are avoided. Read all letters very carefully and keep your temper under control. **Good dates:** 9, 10, 11 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 6, 9 and 11. **Favourable direction:** East.



TAURUS (April 21 — May 22) This week courtship, marriage and social activities are under a cloud. Stellar portents promise some success. One or two pleasant surprises are in the offing. The results will be gratifying. Curb extravagant tendencies if you want your financial position to improve. Take care of your health. Romance is forecast although there might be initial troubles. **Good dates:** 7, 9, 11 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 5, and 8. **Favourable direction:** North-west.



GEMINI (May 23 — June 21) This week is most auspicious for commencing new enterprises, making changes, travel, interviews, love, marriage and friendships. Utilise the opportunities. This period is also good for children. They will be successful in their studies and sports. This is the time to choose a good career. You will be successful at the weekend. **Good dates:** 6, 7, 10 and 11. **Lucky numbers:** 1, 3 and 5. **Favourable directions:** South and West.



CANCER (June 22 — July 22) You will make considerable progress in all your activities. There might be some unexpected trouble with a female, but avoid disputes wherever possible. You will be anxious over sudden adversities beyond your control, which will be amicably settled later. Take care of your health. Someone in the family might be sick. Romance is in the offing. **Good dates:** 7, 8 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 4 and 7. **Favourable direction:** North.



LEO (July 23 — August 22) You will be perplexed and apprehensive about your professional career. Look after your family's welfare and that of loved ones. Although some domestic misfortune or disappointment is likely, unexpected good fortune will be yours in other spheres. This is a lucky period for militarymen and police personnel. Translate plans into action. **Good dates:** 8, 9, 11 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 4 and 9. **Favourable direction:** South.



VIRGO (August 23 — September 22) Provided extravagance and gambling are avoided, a fair measure of good fortune and happiness will be yours. New friends and fresh interests will keep you busy. Court and marry the right person. Concentrate on vocational activities. Militarymen and police officers will be promoted. Letters from distant places will bring good news. **Good dates:** 8, 9, 11 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 7, 2 and 4. **Favourable directions:** South and West.



LIBRA (September 23 — October 22) This week will be a fortunate one, but guard against over-optimism. Womenfolk will contribute to your happiness. An old problem may cause anxiety. Businessmen are advised to go in for novel business methods. Many Librans benefit in diverse expected and unexpected ways. Some people will be promoted. An unexpected journey is foreseen. **Good dates:** 6, 7 and 8. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 7 and 8. **Favourable directions:** West and North.



SCORPIO (October 22 — November 21) An exceedingly successful, happy and eventful week is predicted for you. All your affairs will prosper. Utilise the splendid opportunities now available. Your own intuition can be your best guide. Control your emotions and do not squander money on doubtful love adventures. Unexpected medical expenditure is foreseen. **Good dates:** 6, 7, 8 and 10. **Lucky numbers:** 3 and 10. **Favourable directions:** North-east and West.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 — December 22) A female relative may give you cause for anxiety, but secret help will be forthcoming. Seize all opportunities and fully exploit them. An unexpected journey will lead to financial benefits. Do not take hasty decisions. Sportsmen and artists will win fame and education. Letters will bring good news from distant places. Avoid litigation. **Good dates:** 7, 9 and 11. **Lucky numbers:** 2, 7 and 8. **Favourable directions:** South and West.



CAPRICORN (December 23 — January 20) A week of ups and downs is predicted. Expected and unexpected benefits through friends and relatives are indicated. Some relatives and children may give you cause for worry. Watch expenditure, especially where children are concerned. Do not undertake journeys. This is also not the time to make changes and take decisions. **Good dates:** 6, 9, 11 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 3, 6 and 9. **Favourable direction:** North.



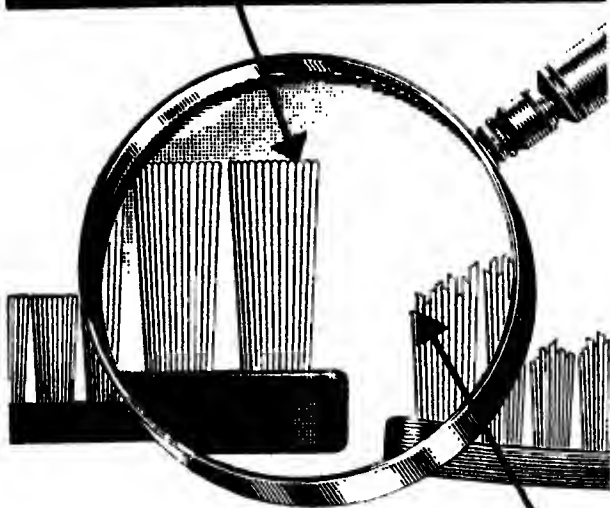
AQUARIUS (January 21 — February 19) This week presages a fair measure of success and happiness. New friends will contribute to your achievements. You are advised to keep your temper under control. An elderly female relative will prove helpful. On the financial front you will make large profits. Do not indulge in speculation or gambling. Check extravagance. **Good dates:** 7, 9, 11 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 9, 10 and 12. **Favourable directions:** South and East.



PISCES (February 20 — March 20) Caution is advised against overstrain and in dealings with elderly relatives. Many pleasant surprises are in store for you. Secret matters will progress. Forge ahead on all fronts. New friendships and fresh interests will keep you busy. Children and intellectuals will prove helpful. Watch finances carefully. **Good dates:** 9 and 12. **Lucky numbers:** 7, 8 and 3. **Favourable direction:** West.

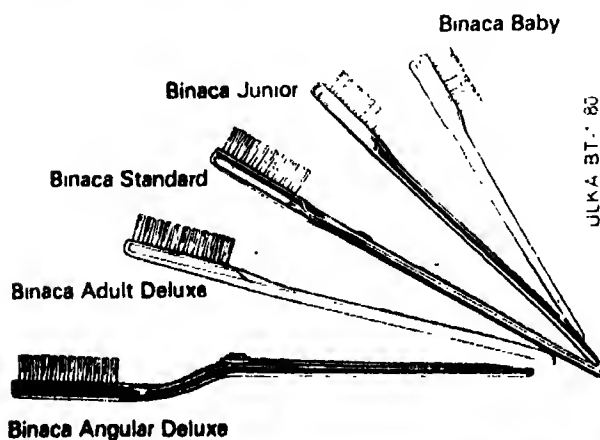
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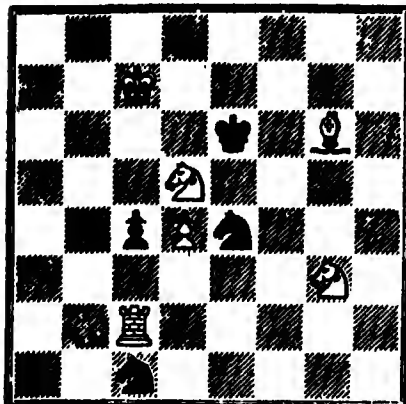


poise
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chess

B. Hirst



White to play and mate in 3 moves

International ratings

THE ABILITY of a footballer is generally gauged by his value on the transfer market, but in chess we are more scientific, less commercial. The Elo system, brainchild of the American/Hungarian Professor Arpad Elo, is an internationally recognised method of quantifying chessplaying ability or, to be more accurate, performance. All games played in international competition are 'rated' and annual lists of these ratings are published by FIDE, the world chess federation. Experience has shown that the Elo system is both accurate and sensitive. The top six on the 1979 list are: Karpov 2705, Korchnoi 2695, Portisch, Spassky 2640, Polugaevsky, Timman 2625, and few would argue that these are not in fact the best six active players in the world today.

Not everybody appears on the Elo list, only those who play a certain number of games in international competition. For the benefit of those who do not compete internationally, most national federations publish their own rating lists, which are generally computed on the Elo scale. In this country, home of the furlong, bushel and hundredweight, such subordination to international standardisation would be unthinkable, so the British Chess Federation operates its own scale which bears no visible relationship to any other anywhere else in the world. Players in this country who play internationally have, therefore, two ratings, Elo and BCF. Although the two scales are computed in fundamentally different ways, the correlation between them is quite high, which seems to suggest that statistics do not in fact lie, but merely give alternative versions of the same truth.

For anybody interested in the workings and statistical bases of rating systems, 'The Rating Of Chessplayers Past And Present' by Arpad Elo (Batsford, £6.50) gives a lucid and fascinating account of the theory and practice of international ratings. Nor does it stop there. All manner of statistical delights are covered. There are graphs and charts to show that you will probably not reach your chessplaying peak for another five years, but the fact that you were born in Bethnal Green virtually rules out your chances of ever becoming world champion. How many lumps of sugar does a grandmaster take in his tea? Well, I'm starting to exaggerate, but you should by now be getting the general idea.

Of course there are those who view any attempt to reduce reality to arithmetic with a certain degree of nausea, but the great majority will find this book absorbing read-

ing. However sceptical one may be of statistical analyses, the inescapable fact remains that, in chess at any rate, the indicators have proved to be remarkably accurate.

Not much space for a game today, so instead a problem (see diagram) contributed by a reader, Mr B. Hirst. My thanks to Mr Hirst for a neat and ingenious puzzle.

Solution: 1. R-K2; N (s) 1... N x R 2. N x N and if 2... K x N 3. B-B7 mate, else 3. N(2)-B4 mate. or (b) 1... K x N 2. R x N and 3. B-B7 mate. or (c) 1... N-Q6 2. R x N and 3. R x N mate. or finally (d) 1... P-B6; 2. R x N and 3. R x N; 3. B-B7 mate.

MICHAEL STEAN

bridge

WHEN a declarer makes more tricks than anybody watching all four hands on Vugraph has foreseen, it is fair to assume that he has played with exceptional skill. Pao Sundelin won a Bols Brillancy Prize for his play of this deal from the match between Sweden and France.

Dealer, West. Lova all.

♠ 6 2		♠ Q 10 8
♥ Q 9		♥ A 8 5
♦ K 8 2		♦ J 10 7 3
♣ A 8 6 5 3 2		♣ Q J 10

	N	
♠	Q 10 8	
♥	A 8 5	
♦	J 10 7 3	
♣	Q J 10	

	W	E
♠	Q 10 8	
♥	A 8 5	
♦	J 10 7 3	
♣	Q J 10	

	S	
♠	Q 10 8	
♥	A 8 5	
♦	J 10 7 3	
♣	Q J 10	

South played in Four Hearts and a spade, was led. It seemed a borderline contract. The declarer made a good start by winning with ♠ K and leading a heart to the King. This leaves him better placed than finessing the Jack, even if this forces the Ace. He continued with a spade to the Ace and a spade ruff, West overruffing with the Queen.

West tried a diamond now (Ace of clubs is no better). Declarer won with the Queen in this position:

♠ —		♠ J 7 5
♥ —		♥ 10 7 6
♦ K 8		♦ 9 5
♣ A 8 6 5 3 2		♣ —

	N	
♠	Q 10 8	
♥	A 8 5	
♦	J 10 7 3	
♣	Q J 10	

	W	E
♠	Q 10 8	
♥	A 8 5	
♦	J 10 7 3	
♣	Q J 10	

	S	
♠	Q 10 8	
♥	A 8 5	
♦	J 10 7 3	
♣	Q J 10	

Commentators and audience noted that, South could be sure of ten tricks by forcing out the Ace of hearts. Sundelin deceived us all by cashing ♦ A, ruffing a club, and leading a good spade from the table. This wins eleven tricks against any defence.

In *Improve Your Bridge* (Bodley Head, £2.95), Rixi Markus shows that she can write as well for inexperienced players as for those who like to study her idiosyncratic methods in tournament play.

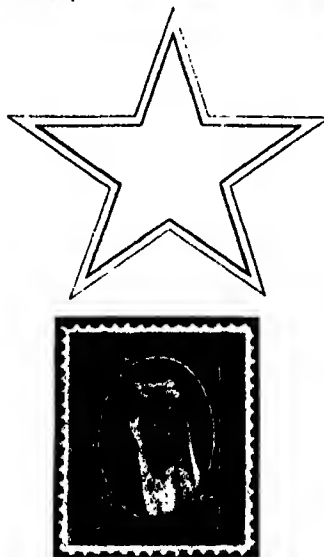
New Ideas in Defensive Play, by Helge Vinje (Robert Hale, £4.95), English version edited by Terence Reese, is a most valuable contribution to the whole theme of defensive signalling.

TERENCE REESE

stamps



ALMOST a century of change in Botswana is chronicled on the country's stamps. When southern Bechuanaland became a Crown Colony in 1885, it was provided with Cape of Good Hope stamps overprinted 'British Bechuanaland'. In the huge area north of the River Molopo the Crown 'Protectorate' was added to the Crown Colony issues. In 1960 the two territories merged their postal services and, having resisted plans to place them under the control of the British South Africa Company or of South Africa itself, they emerged to independence as Botswana in 1966. Since then there have been some attractive pictorial series featuring African animals, birds and flowers. The latest issue shows examples of Botswana handicrafts, including basketry on this 25-pence stamp.



UNTIL the First World War Iraq was part of the Ottoman Empire and used ordinary Turkish stamps. When the country became a British mandated territory under the League of Nations, it was provided with a pictorial series engraved by Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co. These stamps, showing such scenes as the Arch of Ctesiphon and the Sunni mosque at Musadhdam, near Baghdad, were familiar in Britain because British units were stationed in Iraq. In 1927 a new series portraying King Faisal I included as its top value this handsome 25-rupee stamp. A mint example recently realised £130 in a Robson Lowe sale at Bournemouth. A 1-rupee stamp in the same design is still quite common.

C. W. HILL

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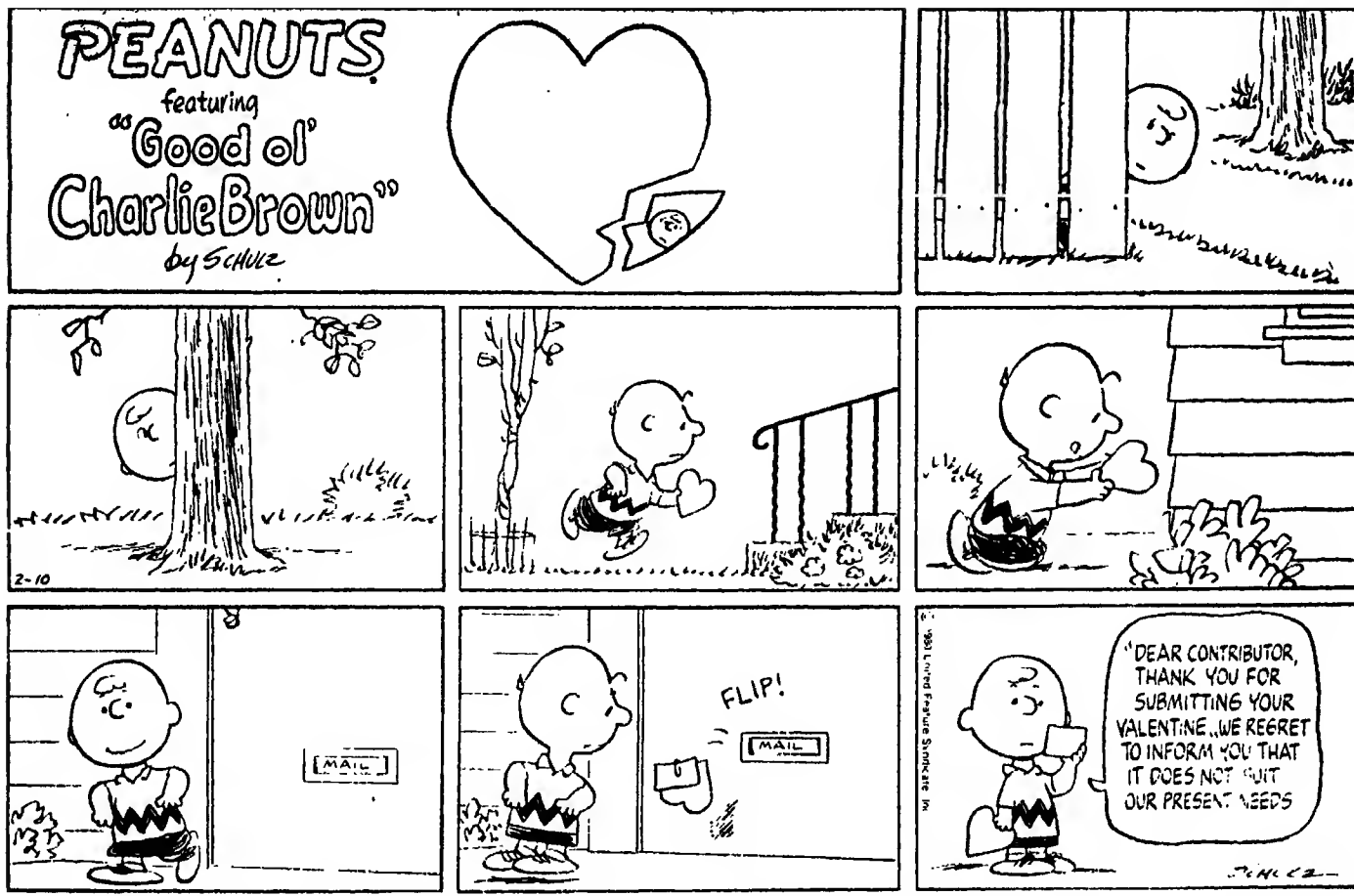


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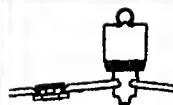
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JABALPUR: A bride's parents had to face an unusual demand from the bridegroom soon after the marriage had been solemnised. He demanded 100 litres of diesel before he would partake of the sumptuous feast. The parents, caught unawares by the demand, said they could give anything but diesel, which is extremely scarce. The groom, however, persisted. He said the marriage party could not return to Parasia about 150 km from here, unless 100 litres of diesel was provided for the vehicle which had brought them to Jabalpur. A compromise was reached ultimately and some diesel was arranged for a jeep which left with the newly-wed and some relations. Other members of the marriage party left later by bus—*Times of India* (P. Sanja, New Delhi)

NEW DELHI: An invigilator has been caught eve-teasing. A tense atmosphere prevailed at the M. L. Higher Secondary School, Narela, where nearly 40 girls and their parents surrounded an invigilator who had teased some girl examinees on March 14. The invigilator, Mr M. L. Mahajan, a teacher, is reported to have stopped supervising the boys, of whom he was in charge, and gone instead to the room where girl examinees were sitting and teased some of them. On March 15, the girls and their agitated parents caught hold of Mr Mahajan as he was coming out. Before the events could take a violent turn, police intervened and arrested Mr Mahajan under apprehension of a breach of the peace—*Hindustan Times* (Mahmood Aslam Siddiqui, Delhi)

HOSKOTE: Policemen at Nandagudi near here have a problem—that too in their own station—of dealing with disorderly reptiles. They have to keep a watch on snakes that move about freely in the station premises. There are six snake pits around the station. Snakes are found often curling themselves on the station steps. Sometimes they crawl in. Constable Perumal claims he has killed over 100 snakes during the last five years. The police station is housed in a PWD building and the police have been requesting

the PWD for years to construct compound around the station building—*Deccan Herald* (M. Sampath Kumar, Bangalore)

LUCKNOW: To women's libbers it would have been atrocious but the innocent villager of Bahraich thought it a good bargain to exchange his wife for a buffalo. A resident of Prayagpur village in Bahraich on the Indo-Nepal border was naturally upset when he discovered that his wife was in love with another man. But he did not react violently. According to information, the villager took away the buffalo of his wife's paramour. In exchange he handed over his wife to him. The buffalo costs around Rs 5,000—*Times of India* (Arshad Monir, Aligarh)

JAMMU: The Jammu police had a big surprise last night after they arrested a burqa-clad woman on charge of theft—the wearer turned out to be a man. Police said that Tariq Shah, a retired sub-inspector of the State police, used to commit thefts dressed in a burqa and posing as a beggar. Several allegedly stolen goods are stated to have been recovered from his possession. He was arrested inside a hospital when a woman patient noticed the sari he was wearing under the burqa; the sari belonged to the woman and it had allegedly been stolen while she was under treatment—*The Statesman* (Vinod Bishnoi, Patna)

HYDERABAD: A 10-paisa coin offered to Mother Teresa by a beggar in Calcutta brought her greater joy than the Nobel Prize. She said this at the Administrative Staff College of India here. Mother Teresa said the beggar approached her pleading: "Mother, everyone is giving you something for the cause of destitutes but I have nothing to offer you. Will you please accept this 10 paise?" She said she was deeply moved, by the gesture and could never forget it—*The Statesman* (Lakhmikanth Adhikary, Orissa)

BASTI: The Hijra (eunuch) Association of Basti district has requested the State Government to allow the recruitment of eunuchs in the Police department. At its meeting here the Association adopted a resolution expressing concern over the alleged involvement of police personnel in rape cases. A copy of the resolution was sent to the State Government—*Hindustan Times* (B. B. L. Sharma, New Delhi)

GORAKHPUR: Two primary school teachers were among the three dacoits recently arrested by the Sikriganj police in connection with a number of dacoities committed in the region. The teachers have confessed the crime—*Times of India* (B. B. L. Sharma, New Delhi)

IT was easier than I thought. I just tried to keep the shuttle in and he made all the mistakes—Prakash Padukone after defeating Liem Swie King in the finals of the prestigious All-England Badminton Championship

FOR two years Mrs Gandhi had to contend with her political enemies; now she has to contend with her supporters—Khushwant Singh in *New Delhi*.

YOU (Mrs Gandhi) have fortunately the great asset that any politician can ever possess, namely, the love and affection of the people—Justice P. N. Bhagwati of the Supreme Court in a letter to Mrs Gandhi

INDIRAJI is the real Congress and wherever she goes, the Congress will go with her... Indiraji is my rahnuma—Zail Singh, Union Home Minister

ZAIL SINGH Sees Sanjay Every Day at 9 PM — *Headline in Organiser*

IT IS baseless to say that I am unhappy because I was not taken in the Central Government... Wherever I am, I have come to stay—H. N. Bahuguna, Congress (I) secretary general

IN just two months, she (Mrs Gandhi) has offended Nepal, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan...—*Organiser*

HOW can I tolerate any Congress (I) member's remark that I am undemocratic?—Sheikh Abdullah, Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir

SOMEWHERE along the way, Jagjivan Ram lost touch with the changing scene... The personal tragedy of Jagjivan Ram is a symbol of the larger tragedy of traditional leadership—S. Nihal Singh in *India Today*

I HAVE enough intelligence and education to decide for myself—Jyoti Basu in the West Bengal Assembly

THE SUC is even more disruptive and anti CPI(M) in its attitude than the Congress (I)—CPI(M) leaders quoted in *The Statesman*

I DON'T notice that I am a woman—Margaret Thatcher, British Prime Minister

RESETTLEMENT colonies which account for one-sixth of the area are my first love—Delhi's Interior and ex-vice chair Delhi Development Authority

GENUINELY VAGUE

ON March 13, a baby son was born to Maneka, younger daughter-in-law of Mrs Gandhi. While the occasion gave many politicians a chance to meet Mrs Gandhi's family, the eunuchs of Delhi stole the show. One such group had been active at 12, Willingdon Crescent shortly after the victory of the Congress (I) in the midterm polls. As soon as news of the birth spread, a batch of eunuchs arrived at 1, Safdarjung Road, the PM's current and official residence. As is customary in northern India on such occasions, they started dancing and demanding money. They were given Rs. 300, but that was not the end of the story. Another group of eunuchs put in an appearance the very next day and demanded money for their performance. When told that a similar group had already performed the previous day and been paid, the second batch insisted that they were genuine, while the others were the frauds.

PLEASING THE GODS



EVER since Mrs Gandhi has re-entered the portals of South Block, she has been visiting one holy place after another. She also organised an 11-day havan (yajna) at 1, Safdarjung Road before shifting back to that house. According to a reliable source, Pandit Kamalpathi Tripathi, her Railway Minister and religious counsellor, has advised her to undertake visits to 55 places of pilgrimage in order to stave off any evils which may befall her. Though the list of these places is not available, it is evident from Mrs Gandhi's visit to the Vaishnodevi shrine that she is taking the advice seriously and is prepared to take the most arduous journey as well. Incidentally, two days after the birth of her third grandchild, she visited the dargah of Chisti at Ajmer and the Brahma Mandir at Pushkar.

SINGH INC.



C. P. N. Singh

C. P. N. Singh is the third successive Singh to become Minister of State for Defence. The earlier post of Defence Production Minister (With the rank of State Minister) was discontinued by Morarji Desai who appointed Professor Sher Singh the State Defence Minister. The post was taken over by Chaudhury Jagbir Singh in the Charan Singh Government. C. P. N. Singh belongs to the princely family of Padrauna, a former state in Deoria district of UP. The two other Singhs had been Jats; Sher Singh from Rohtak and Jagbir Singh from Bulandshar. While the present Government's preference for a Singh for the post, in keeping with tradition, cannot be disputed, there is speculation as to why a Defence Production Minister has not been appointed. The Defence Production Ministry prefers Hindi names and the Ministry in Mrs Gandhi's time used to be called *Raksha Utpadan Mantry*. The acronym of that would be RUM something most obnoxious to Mr Morarji Desai. One can only hope that Mrs Gandhi's pro-prohibitionist attitudes were not a factor in not appointing a 'RUM'.

DISUNITED TO THE END

THE term "Youth Congress" is increasingly being used to refer to the Youth Congress (I), youth wing of the ruling Party. The other Youth Congress, the one owing allegiance to Devaraj Urs's Party, has almost been forgotten although it still exists. Indeed, it still has in its ranks two famous past presidents of the Indian Youth Congress — Priya Ranjan Das Munshi and Ambika Soni. Das Munshi had been reappointed president of the organisation after the Party split in 1978 but recently resigned from the post. Bhim Singh, a firebrand Kashmir MLA, has been the caretaker president following his departure. The choice of a new president has thrown the demoralised organisation into further disarray. The most powerful group comprising Das Munshi, Ambika Soni and Lalit Maken, favours the candidature of Suresh Kalmadi of Pune, who till very recently a member of Sharad Pawar's parallel Congress in Maharashtra. The other faction, led by Bhim Singh and Bhikubhai Jhala of Gujarat favours Kishore Deo, a Congress (U) MP from Andhra Pradesh. While this factionalism shows no

signs of abating, the AICC (U) chief, Devaraj Urs, is reportedly in favour of disbanding the Youth Congress (U) altogether. Instead, it appears that he has in mind the formation of a youth council to be headed by the AICC (U) chief himself. And what of the youth activists? They will be put in charge of cells which will be set up under the youth council.

HER LOYAL OPPOSITION

BEFORE Raj Narain and Babu Jagjivan Ram exposed the chinks in the armour of the opposition, the Congress (I) was apprehensive about the prospects of the Party in the Vidhan Sabha polls. This was caused by the fact that Lok Dal and Janata votes put together in many constituencies in the midterm poll amounted to more than those polled by the Congress (I). Now the situation has changed drastically. One Youth Congress (I) MP from Uttar Pradesh, who wields considerable influence in the AICC (I) office, was heard saying recently: "Thanks to Babuji and Netaji, we will now surely get 300 seats out of the total of 425 in UP".

D. E. NIZAMUDDIN

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